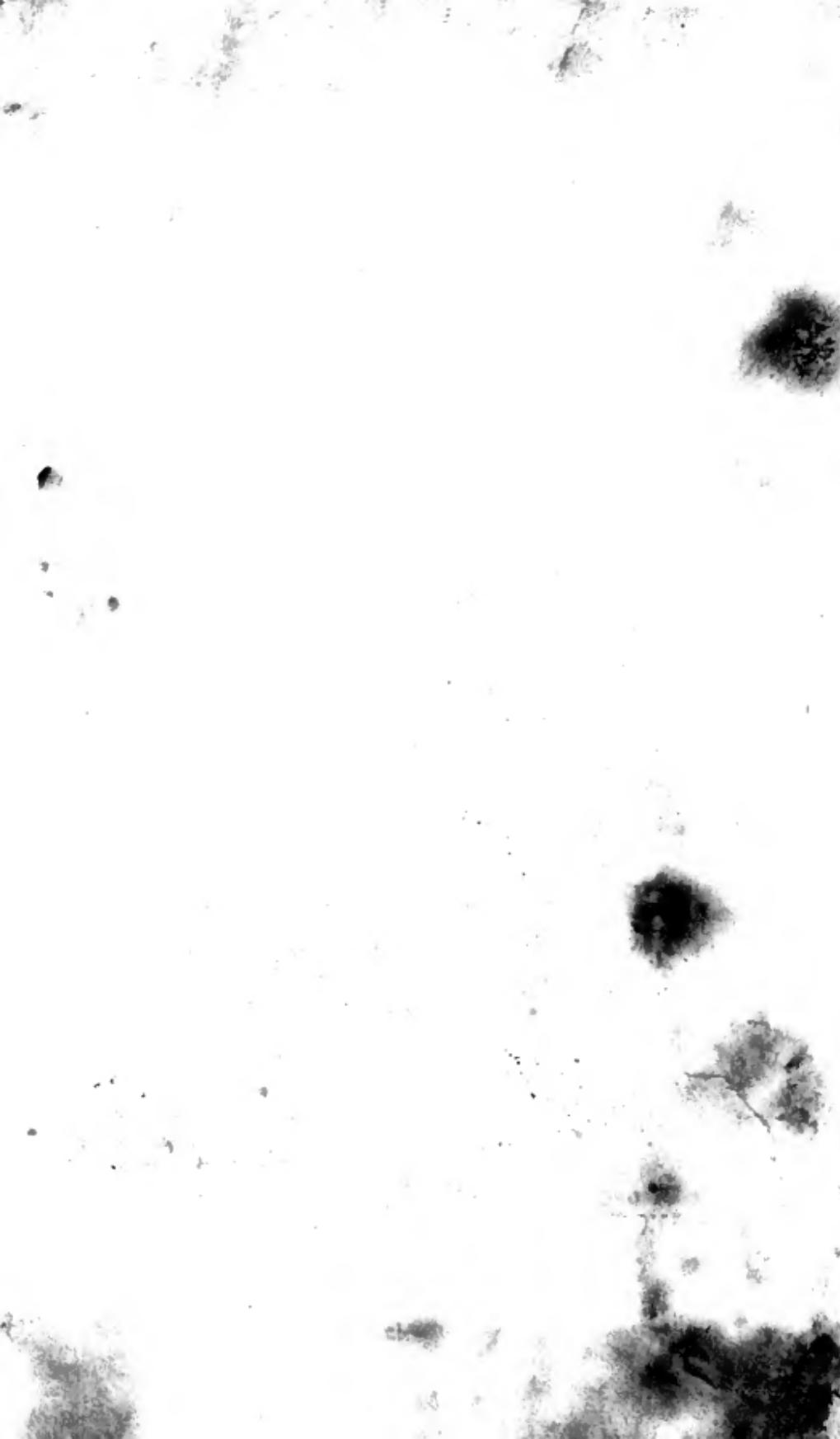


CHILDREN'S BOOK
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LOS ANGELES





Prince of the Peaceable Island,
attracted by the Charms of the Beautiful Isle.

THE
ENCHANTER;
OR
WONDERFUL STORY TELLER:

IN WHICH IS CONTAINED
A SERIES OF ADVENTURES,
CURIOS, SURPRISING, AND UNCOMMON;
CALCULATED TO
AMUSE, INSTRUCT, AND IMPROVE
YOUNGER MINDS.

This Work to mend the Morals is design'd;
To shew to Youth the Paths of Wrong and Right;
To aid the Judgment and Improve the Mind,
And to convey Instruction with Delight.

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For the Description of the elegant Frontispiece,
see Page 20.



THE
ENCHANTER,
OR
WONDERFUL STORY-TELLER.

HISTORY of the PRINCESS HEBE,

AND THE

FAIRY ANGUILLETTA.

HOW great soever fortune may raise those she favours, yet there is no happiness exempt from trouble. Those who have any knowledge of the Faires, cannot be ignorant, that they, as wise as they seem, have not yet found out the secret of securing themselves from the misfortune of changing their shapes some days in each month, and assuming that of a beast, bird, or fish.

On these fatal days, when they are left a prey to the cruelty of men, it is often difficult for them to save themselves from the danger to which this hard necessity exposes them.

One of them, who transformed herself into an eel, was unluckily taken by some fishermen, who put her presently into a cistern of water, in the middle of a fine meadow, where they kept the fish reserved for the king's table.

Anguiletta, which was the fairy's name, found there a great many fine fish, and heard the fishermen say one to another, ' That the king made that night a great entertainment, for which those fish had been carefully picked out.'

What dismal news was this for the unhappy fairy, who accused her fate a thousand times, and sighed grievously when she got to the bottom, whither she went, that she might bewail her misfortune the more privately. The desire of avoiding the impending danger, made her look abroad on all sides, to see if there was any way to escape, and regain the river, which was but a small distance from thence; but it proved all in vain, the cistern was too deep to hope to get out of it without assistance: and her fears increased when she saw the fishermen who took her, approaching, who put in their nets; and Anguiletta, by avoiding them, thought only to defer her death for some time.

At that instant the king's youngest daughter, who was then walking in the meadow, came to the cistern to amuse herself with looking at the fish; the sun, which was then about setting, shining in the water, Anguiletta's skin, which was streaked with gold, appeared so bright, that the princess took notice of it, and finding it very beautiful, bid the fishermen take that eel, and give it her.

When the princess had looked on Anguiletta some time, moved with compassion, she ran to the river-side, and threw her in; which unhopec for service touched the fairy's heart with so lively an acknowledgment, that she appeared that very moment on the top of the water, and said to the princess, ' I owe my life to you, ' generous Plousina, (which was the name of the princess) ' which is a great happiness for you. Be not ' afraid,' (continued she, seeing her going to run away) ' I am a fairy, and will satisfy you in the truth of my ' words by what I wil' do for you.'

As they were used to see fairies in those days, Plousina took courage, and gave great attention to Anguiletta's agreeable promises, and was about to make some answer; when the fairy interrupting her, said, ' Stay ' till you have received my favours, before you assure ' me of your acknowledgement. Go, young princess, ' and come here again to-morrow morning; wish for ' what you would have, and I will as soon accomplish ' it; chuse either perfect beauty, a lively piercing wit, or

' or vast riches.' After these words, Anguiletta dived into the water, and left Plousina very well satisfied with her adventure.

She resolved to trust nobody with what had happened to her; for she said to herself, ' If Anguiletta should deceive me, my sisters may think I have invented this story.'

After this short reflection she returned to her train, which consisted only of a few women, whom she found looking for her.

All that night the young Plousina was engaged in the choice she was to make; that of beauty had a great sway with her; but as she had wit enough to desire more, she resolved to ask that favour of the fairy.

She rose next day with the sun, ran to the meadow, as she said, to gather flowers to make a garland, to present to her mother when she was up; but at the same time, while her women dispersed themselves in the meadow, which was all enamelled, to pick out the finest and sweetest flowers, the young princess stole to the river's side, and found at the place where she had seen the fairy, a pillar of white marble, perfectly fine, which presently opened, and the fairy came out of it; who was no longer a fish, but a beautiful woman, of a majestic air, whose head-dress and other apparel were covered over with jewels, ' I am Anguiletta, (said she to the young princess, who looked at her with great attention) and come to perform my promise; you have made choice of wit; you shall have, from this moment, enough to deserve the envy of those who have hitherto pretended to it.'

The young Plousina, after these words, found herself quite different from what she was an instant before; she thanked the fairy with an eloquence, which till then she had never been mistress of; the fairy smiling at the princess's amazement to find so much ease in expressing herself.

' I am so well pleased, (continued the kind Anguiletta) at the choice you have preferably made to beauty, which people of your age are so much delighted

' with, that to recompense you, I will bestow that beauty upon you, which you this day have so prudently neglected. Come again to-morrow at the same hour, I give you that time to chuse how beautiful you would be.'

Then the fairy disappearing, left the young Plousina more pleased than ever: the choice of wit was the effect of reason, but the promise of beauty flattered her heart; and what reaches that, we are generally the most affected with.

The young princess leaving the river's side, went to receive the flowers her women presented her with, of which she made a very agreeable garland, and carried it to the queen; but how surprised was that princess, the king, and the whole court, when they heard the young Plousina speak with a grace that captivated their hearts.

The princesses, her sisters, strove in vain to think herself wittier than others; but were forced to yield, even to their astonishment and admiration.

At night the princess, possessed with the hopes of being handsome, instead of going to bed, sat up in her closet, which was hung with pictures, which represented, under the figures of goddesses, all the queens and princesses of her house; and as all those pictures were very fine, she hoped they might be assisting to her in the choice of a beauty worthy of being asked of the fairy.

A Juno presented herself first to her eyes, fair, and set off with an air fit to represent the queen of the gods; Pallas and Venus were by her: this piece being the Judgment of Paris.

The young princess was very much pleased with the pride and stateliness of Pallas; but the beauty of Venus inclined her there to fix her choice: nevertheless she passed on to the next, where Pomona leaning on a bed of tufts, under trees loaded with the finest fruits, who seemed so charming, that the princess, who since the morning knew every thing, was not surprised that a god had assumed so many shapes to strive to please her.

Diana

Diana appeared next, as represented by the poets, a quiver on her back, and a bow in her hand, pursuing a stag, and followed by her nymphs.

Flora appeared a little more careful; she seemed walking in a parterre, the flowers of which, though admirable, came not up to her complexion. Next her were the graces, who looked beautiful and engaging.

But the princess was most struck with a picture that hung over the chimney, which was the goddess of youth; a charming air appeared through the whole figure; the hair was of the finest white, the turn of her face admirable, the mouth delicate, the shape and breasts perfectly fine and beautiful, and her eyes appeared more formidable to disturb our reason, than the nectar she was feigned to pour out.

' I will (cried the young princess, viewing the lovely portrait) be as beautiful as Hebe, and, if possible, as lasting.'

After this, she went into her chamber, where the day she expected seemed too slow to second her impatience; but at length appeared, she returned to the river side, where the fairy kept her word: and throwing some water in Plousina's face, rendered her as beautiful as she wished to be.

The first effects of the fortunate Plousina's charms, was the praises of some sea-gods that accompanied the fairy; she saw herself in the water, and knew not herself, her silence and amazement being then the only marks of acknowledgement. ' I have fulfilled all your desires, (said the generous Fairy to her) you ought to be satisfied, but I shall not, till I have exceeded your desires by my bounty.'

' I give you wit and beauty, all the treasures in my disposal, which are inexhaustible; wish only for what riches you would have, and you shall that minute obtain them, both for yourself, and whoever you think fit.'

The fairy afterwards disappeared, and the young Plousina, who was then as handsome as Hebe, returned to the palace. All that met her were charmed. They

told the king of her arrival, who admired her himself, but knew her only by her voice and wit. She informed him that a fairy had bestowed those invaluable gifts on her; and that she would be called Hebe, because she perfectly resembled the picture of that goddess.

What new grounds of hatred were here for her sisters! Her wit gave them less jealousy than her beauty now.

All the princes who had been captivated by their charms, no longer balanced to become unfaithful; they forsook all the beauties of that court, no tears nor reproaches could stay those fickle lovers: and this proceeding, which at that time appeared so surprising, has since, they say, become common. In short, they all burnt for Hebe, whose heart remained insensible.

Notwithstanding the hatred of her sisters, she neglected nothing that might please them; she wished for so much treasure for the eldest, for to wish and give, was with her the same) that the greatest monarch of that country asked that princess in marriage, and the wedding was consummated, with great magnificence.

The king, Hebe's father, being inclined to raise a great army, the wishes of that fair princess crowned all his enterprises with success; his kingdom and treasury became thereby very much enriched, which rendered him a most formidable prince.

Nevertheless the divine Hebe, wearied with the hurry of the court, went to spend some months in a pretty box, some distance from the capital town, where she laid aside all magnificence, contenting herself with what was gallant, and of a charming plainness; nature there only embellished the walks, since art was not then used.

A wood surrounded this pretty retreat, the paths of which had something wild in them, divided by brooks and little rivulets, which formed natural cascades.

The young Hebe, walking often in this solitary wood, one day felt a secret grief and languishing, which never forsook her; she was ignorant of the cause of it, and sat herself down on the grass by the brook-side, the purling noise of which entertained her thoughts.

' What chagrin, (said she to herself) disturbs the excess of my good fortune? What princess in the world enjoys so perfect a happiness as myself? I have, by the fairy's bounty, all I wish for; I can load all about me with riches; all that see me, adore me; and yet my heart possesses not quiet thoughts. I cannot imagine whence proceeds the insupportable disquiet which hath, for sometime, opposed the felicity of my life.'

Thus the young princess continually reflected, till at length she resolved to go to the river, to endeavour to see Anguilettta.

The fairy, accustomed to flatter her desires, appeared on the water, for it was one of those days when she was metamorphosed into a fish.

' I behold you always with pleasure, young princess, (said she to Hebe;) I know you are come from a very solitary abode, and you appear to be languishing, which is no way agreeable to your fortune. What ails you, Hebe? Tell me.'

' I ail nothing, (replied the young princess, in confusion;) you have heaped too many favours on me, to want any thing to complete the happiness which you have bestowed on me.'

' You fain would deceive me, (answered the fairy) I know very well you are not content; but what can you desire more? Merit my bounty by a sincere confession, and I promise to accomplish your desires.'

' I know not what I would have, (said the charming Hebe;) yet I am sensible (continued she, louring her eyes) want something that is absolutely necessary to complete my happiness.'

' Oh! (cried the fairy) 'tis love you desire; that passion is only capable of making you think so fantastically as you do.'

' A dangerous disposition! (continued the young fairy.) You want love, you shall have it; hearts are naturally but too much disposed to it; but let me tell you, you will call on me in vain to put an end to that fatal

‘ passion you think so great a happiness, my power not extending so far.’

‘ That matters not, (replied the young princesses hastily, blushing and smiling at the same time;) Alas ! what should I do with all the riches you have given me, if I, in my turn, might not contribute to another’s felicity?’ At this discourse the fairy sighed, and shrank beneath the water.

Hebe returned to her solitude, with hopes that already began to calm her troubles; the fairy’s menaces somewhat disturbed her, but whose wise reflections were soon chased away by others more dangerous, but much more delightful.

When she came to the little box, she found a messenger from the king, who sent for her to come to court the next day. The king and queen received her with pleasure, and told her that a strange prince in his travels arrived at that court, they had a mind to make an entertainment for him, to shew other courts the magnificence of theirs.

The young Hebe, in a trouble she could not account for, asked her sister at first if the stranger was handsome? ‘ You never saw any thing like him,’ (answered the princesses.) ‘ Describe him to me,’ (replied the fair Hebe in disorder.)

‘ He is such as they feign heroes to be, (answered Ileria;) his shape is fine, his air noble, his eyes full of fire, the power of which one of the most insensible ladies of the court has already confessed: he has a very fine head of brown hair, and needs but shew himself to gain the attention of all that see him.’

‘ You set him off to the best advantage, replied Hebe) do you not flatter him?’ ‘ No, sister, (answered the princess Ileria, with a sigh she could not restrain:) Alas! you will find him but too worthy of pleasing.’

At night the prince paid the queen a visit, who presented him to Hebe, whom he had not seen; but never were two hearts so soon, or so sensibly touched, or ever had more reason.

The conversation was on different subjects, but bright and agreeable, and supported by all that vivacity the desire of pleasing could inspire.

When the queen retired, and the fair Hebe had time to make some reflections, she was sensible she had lost that tranquillity which she knew not the value of. ‘ O! Anguiletta, (cried she, as soon as alone;) what an object you permitted me to behold! Your sage counsels are destroyed by his presence. Why gave you not me strength to resist such charms? But perhaps their power exceeds that of a fairy.’

Hebe slept but little that night, she rose very early, and the care of dressing her against the entertainment at night, amused her all that day with an attention she was ignorant of till then; she being willing to please for the first time, the young stranger, whose desires were the same, forgot nothing that might render him amiable in the charming Hebe’s eyes. The princess Ileria, on her part, neglected nothing that might please; she was mistress of a thousand beauties, and when Hebe was absent, appeared the most charming person in the whole world; but that princess’s presence effaced them all.

At night there was a noble entertainment, followed by a fine ball, and the young stranger had, without dispute, taken notice of the magnificence, could he have regarded any thing but the beautiful Hebe.

After the repast there was a fine illumination, which gave as great light in the gardens of the palace, as if it had been day. They went to take a pleasant walk. The lovely stranger gave the queen his hand; but that honour did not make amends for the chagrin of being separated a moment from his princess. The trees were covered with festoons of flowers, and the lamps which gave the light were disposed in such a manner as to represent bows and arrows, and other arms of love, and in some places formed lines of writing.

They went into a little wood illuminated like the gardens, where the queen sat herself down by an agreeable fountain, about which there were placed seats of turfs, adorned with garlands of pinks and roses. While

the queen talked with the king, with a great crowd of courtiers about them, the princesses amused themselves with looking at some characters the little lamps formed, the amiable stranger standing then by the charming Hebe, who casting her eyes on a place where arrows were represented, read aloud these words, which were written under them:

“They are invincible.”

“ Such are the darts shot from the divine Hebe’s ‘eyes,’ (said the unknown prince, looking on her tenderly.) The princess heard him, and was confused; but her embarrassment seemed to the prince a happy presage to his love, he having observed no anger.

When the diversions were over, the charms of the stranger had too sensibly touched the heart of Ileria, for her not to perceive he loved another. Before Hebe’s coming to court, that prince had rendered her some little favours; but since that, had been altogether taken up with his tenderness for Hebe.

In the mean time, this young stranger endeavoured by his love to move the heart of the beautiful princess. He was in love, amiable, and his fate obliged him to love; and the fairy abandoning her to the inclination of her heart, what excuses were there for her to yield, who could not long hold out against herself?

The charming stranger told her he was a king’s son, and was called Atimir, whose name was well known to the princes; for that prince had done wonders in a war between the two kingdoms; and as they had always been enemies, he went not by his true name at her father’s court.

The young princess, after a conversation, wherein her heart had fully received the sweet and dangerous poison the fairy had spoken to her of, permitted Atimer to discover to the king his rank, and love; who transported with joy, ran to his majesty, and spoke to him with all the ardour his tenderness could inspire.

The

The king conducted him to the queen. Before this marriage, a lasting peace was made, and the beautiful Hebe was promised to her happy lover, as soon as he had received his father's consent. This news being spread abroad, the princess Ileria felt a grief equal to her jealousy: she cried and groaned, but was forced to constrain herself, and conceal her useless grief.

The charming Hebe and Atimir seeing one another every day, their tenderness augmented, and at that happy time, the princess could not comprehend why the fairies, when they would complete the happiness of mortals, should not use all their art and knowledge to make them love.

An ambassador from Atimir's father arrived at court, who had been expected with great impatience, and brought with him his consent; every thing was prepared for the marriage, and Atimir had nothing to fear; a dangerous state for a lover one would preserve faithful!

The prince thus assured of his happiness, became somewhat less sensible: one day, as he was looking for Hebe in the gardens of the palace, he heard the voices of some women in a summer-box of honey suckles; and hearing his name mentioned, which excited his curiosity to know more, he drew near to them, and heard the princess Ileria say to a person that was with her, ‘ I shall die before that fatal day, my dear Cleonice: the gods will not permit me to see the ungrateful man whom I love, united to the too happy Hebe: my torments are too grievous for my life to endure much longer.’ ‘ But, madam, (answered the damsel) the prince Atimir is not unfaithful, he never made you any vows; fate alone is the cause of your misfortunes; and among so many princes that adore you, you may find more amiable than him, if a fatal prevention possesses not your heart.’

‘ Is there any in the whole world so lovely as him? ’ (replied Ileria.) Powerful fairy! (added she, with a sigh, of all the favours you have bestowed on the fortunate Hebe, I only envy Atimir’s love.)

This discourse of the princess's was interrupted by her tears Alas! how happy had she been, had she known how much she touched the heart of Atimir?

She started up to go out of the box, and the prince hid himself behind some trees. The tears and passion of Ileria had softened his heart, which he looked upon then only as compassion, in favour of a beautiful princess, whom he, against his will, had made unhappy. Afterwards he went and found Hebe, whose charms suspended all other thoughts at that time.

In crossing the gardens to return to the palace, he found something under his feet, which he took up, and found it to be a fine pocket-book. It was not far off the box where he heard the conversation of Ileria, therefore he feared to shew the pocket-book, lest he should give Hebe any knowledge of that adventure; but hid it from that princess, who was then employed in doing something to her head-dress.

That night Ileria went not to the queen, who was told she was not very well after walking; and Atimir comprehended that she had a mind to conceal the disorder he had seen her in at the box, which thought redoubled his compassion.

As soon as he got to his apartment, he opened the pocket-book he had found, and on the first leaf found a cypher of a double *A*, crowned with myrrh, and supported by two lovers, one of which seemed to wipe his eyes, and the other to break his arrows.

The sight of this cypher moved the young prince: he knew very well what Ileria meant; turned over the next leaf to know more, and found these words wrote on the back side:

Almighty love, your charms display'd,
Which did my easy heart invade:
Ah, cruel! thus your power to prove,
And blest another with your love.

The hand, which he knew very well, informed him it was the princess Ileria's book: he was touched with those

those tender sentiments, which, far from being supported by his love and care, were not so much as supported by hope. These verses put him in mind, that before Hebe's arrival at the court, he thought Ileria amiable; he began to look upon himself as false to that princess, and indeed, became too much so to the charming Hebe.

However he opposed the first emotions; but his heart was used to be fickle, and we seldom are capable of breaking ourselves of an ill habit.

He threw Ileria's pocket-book upon the table, resolved never to look into it; but took it up again in spite of himself a moment afterwards, and found in it a thousand things which completed Ileria's triumph over the divine Hebe.

A thousand confused thoughts possessed the prince's heart all night; in the morning he waited on the king, who appointed the day of his marriage with Hebe. Atimir answered with a confusion, which the king took for a mark of his love. How hard is it to know the hearts of men, since that confusion was the effect of his infidelity!

The king was going to the queen, and the prince was obliged to follow him. He had not been there long, when the princess Ileria appearing with a languishing look, which the inconstant Atimir knowing too well the cause of, rendered her more lovely in his eyes; he made up to her, talked to her a long while, and informed her he was not ignorant of her sentiments for him; and afterwards explained himself to her with a tenderness, which was an happiness too great, and but little expected by Ileria.

The charming Hebe came in at the same time; the sight of her made the princess Ileria and the light Atimir blush. ‘How handsome she is! (said Ileria, looking ‘on the prince with an emotion she could not conceal:) ‘fly hence, Sir, or deprive me quite of life.’ To which the prince could make no answer.

When Hebe approached with an air and charms which cast a thousand reproaches on the ungrateful Atimir, all

all which he could not support, he left the princess, and told her he was going to dispatch a courier to the king his father; and she, for her part, being prepossessed in his favour, observed not those looks he sometimes cast on Ileria.

While Ileria triumphed secretly, the fair Hebe was told by the king and queen, she was to be married to Atimir in three days. But how unworthy was he then of the sentiments that news created in the heart of the lovely Hebe?

The prince, though possessed with a false passion, spent part of the day with Hebe; and Ileria, who knew of it, thought she should have died a thousand times for jealousy; her love redoubling whenever she had any the least hope.

As the prince was going into his apartment at night, he received a letter from an unknown man, which he opened in haste, and found these words in it.

'I Yield to a passion a thousand times more strong
 than my reason; but since it is in vain to conceal
 those sentiments from you, which chance hath dis-
 covered, come, prince, and know the resolution my
 tender love hath made me take. How happy should
 I be, if it cost me but my life!'

The person that brought this letter, told him, he was ordered to conduct him where the princess Ileria waited for him. Atimir, without considering a moment, followed him. After a great many turnings and windings, they came to a small pavilion full of lights, which was at the end of a close-shaded alley; where he found Ileria with only one of her women, the rest being gone to walk in the garden.

Ileria was sat on a crimson cushion, embroidered with gold; her dress, which was both gallant and magnificent, was yellow and silver tissue; her fine black hair was dressed with ribbons of the same colour as her clothes, intermixed with diamonds. At the sight of her, Atimir, ashamed of being false, fell on his knees by her, and Ileria looking on him with a tenderness that suffi-
 ciently

ently betrayed the sentiments of her heart, said,
 ' Prince, I sent for you, not to persuade you to break off
 ' your marriage: I know too well 'tis resolved on: but
 ' since some words, which you were pleased to flatter my
 ' misfortune and tenderness with, do not permit me to
 ' believe you will leave Hebe for me; yet, (continued
 ' she, with tears that entirely seduced the heart of
 ' Atimir) I will sacrifice to my love, without regret, a
 ' life you have rendered so painful to me; and this
 ' poison (shewing a little golden box she held in her hand)
 ' shall secure me from the frightful punishment of
 ' seeing you Hebe's spouse!'

' No, beautiful Ileria, (cried the fickle prince,) I
 ' will not be hers; I will leave her to please you, whom
 ' I love a thousand times better; and, notwithstanding
 ' my duty and faith so solemnly given, I am ready to
 ' conduct you where nothing shall constrain our love.'
 ' Alas, prince! (said Ileria, sighing,) shall I trust my-
 ' self with one so false?' ' I will never be so to you,
 ' (replied Atimir;) and the king, your father, who gave
 ' me Hebe, will not refuse me the lovely Ileria, when
 ' she shall be in my power.' ' Let us go then, Atimir,
 ' (said the princess, after some time of silence,) let us
 ' go where our fate hurries us; whatever I may suffer,
 ' nothing can balance in my heart the sweet pleasure of
 ' being adored by the man I love.'

Aster these words they consulted measures for their departure; and having no time to lose, they resolved on the night following. They parted with a great deal of reluctance; and, notwithstanding Atimir's oaths, Ileria yet dreaded Hebe's charms, and was, the remainder of the night, and the day following, continually possessed with that fear.

In the mean time the prince gave all necessary orders for their secret departure; and the next night, when every body was retired in the palace, went to Ileria's pavilion in the garden, where she waited for him, attended only by Cleonice. They went away, and with incredible speed, got out of the kingdom. In the morning, this news was made known by a letter Ileria writ to the queen,

queen, and one writ by Atimir to the king; w'ich were very moving, and easily discouvered that love was the dictator. The king and queen were in an extreme rage; but words are not capable to express the piercing griefs of the unfortunate and charming Hebe: how great was her despair, and how many were her tears! What vows did she not offer to the fairy Anguiletta, to put an end to those cruel calamities she had foretold! Hebe returned in vain to the river-side; Anguiletta, who was as good as her word, never appeared, but abandoned her to the most frightful despair. The princes, whom the ungrateful Atimir's good fortune had discarded, took fresh hopes, and their cares and love seemed new torment to the faithful Hebe.

The king desired her passionately to make choice of a spouse, and oftentimes pressed her to it; but this duty appeared too cruel to her tenderness; she resolved to leave her father's kingdom, but before her departure, went once again to find Anguiletta.

The fairy, who this time could not resist the tears of the beautiful Hebe, appeared; at the sight of her the princes renewed her tears, having no power to speak to her. ‘ You now know, (said the fairy) what that fatal happiness is, which I was always willing to refuse you; but, Hebe, Atimir has punished you but too well for not following my advice; go, and avoid this place, which calls into your remembrance all your tenderness; you will find a vessel by the sea-side that will carry you to the only place in the world, where you may be cured of this unhappy passion that causes your despair; but remember, (added Anguiletta, raising her voice,) that when your heart is easy and quiet, you never seek after the fatal presence of Atimir, which will cost you your life.’ Hebe wished more than ever to see that prince once again, whatever that pleasure should cost her; but some remains of reason, and value of her honour, made her resolve to accept of the fairy's proposal. She thanked her for this last kindness, and went the next day to the sea-side, attended by those women she had the greatest confidence in.

There she found Anguilettas vessel, all gilt with gold, the masts of inlaid work, the sails of silver and rose coloured tissue, on which were wrote *Liberty*. The sailors jackets were of the same colour as the sails, and every thing seemed to breath the sweets of Liberty.

The princess went into a magnificent cabin, the furniture of which was admirable, and the paintings perfectly fine. She still afflicted herself as much in this new abode, as in her father's court; they endeavoured to divert her by a thousand pleasures, but the state she was in, would not permit her to give any attention to them.

One day as she was amusing herself in looking on some paintings in the cabin, in the place that represented a landscape, she observed a young shepherdess with a smiling air cutting of nets, to set some birds at liberty that were taken; and some of those little creatures that were escaped; seemed to fly towards heaven with a wonderful swiftness. The other paintings seemed to present such like subjects; nothing seemed to speak of love, but all boasted of the charms of liberty; which made the princess, in a melancholy tone, say, ‘ Will my heart be always insensible for so sweet an happiness, for which my reason makes such vain efforts.’

Thus the unhappy Hebe lived possessed with her tenderness, and at the same time with the desire of forgetting it.

They had been about a month at sea when one morning, as the princess was upon deck, she discerned at a distance, a coast that seemed very pleasant; the trees were of a surprising height and beauty, and when they were nearer, she observed they were full of birds, the plumage of which was of a bright shining colour; they made a charming concert, their songs being so sweet, that they seemed as if they feared to make too great a noise.

When they arrived at this shore, the princess and her women landed; where she no sooner breathed the air of that island, but she felt a perfect tranquillity in her breast, and suffered herself to be surprised by an

an agreeable sleep, which closed her eyes for some time.

This agreeable country, which to her was unknown, was the Peaceable Island, which the Fairy Anguiletta, who was a near relation to the prince and governor there, had endowed for above two thousand years, with the happy gift of curing the most unfortunate passions, and assuring them that gift should still continue; but the difficulty was, to get to that island.

While the beautiful Hebe enjoyed a repose she had not tasted the sweets of for six months before, the prince of the Peaceable Island, was taking the air in that wood which bordered by the sea side, in his chariot, drawn by four white young elephants, and attended by his court.

There he saw the princess asleep: her beauty surprised him. He alighted out of his chariot with a precipitation and vivacity he never felt till then. He took at that sight all the love the charms of Hebe were worthy of inspiring. The noise awakened her, and she opened her eyes, discovered a thousand new beauties to the young prince. He was about the same age of Hebe, which was nineteen; his beauty was perfect; a thousand graces were in all his actions; his shape extraordinary, and his hair, which hung in large ringlets down to the middle of his back, was of the same colour as Hebe's. His habit was made of feathers, of a thousand different colours; he had it over a kind of cloak, that trailed on the ground, made of swans feathers, buckled on the shoulders by very fine diamonds. His belt was all of diamonds, on which hung, by chains of gold, a small sabre, covered over with rubies. He had a kind of head-piece, made of feathers like the rest, on which was buttoned, by a very large diamond, some heron feathers, which set it off with great splendor.

This prince was the first object that presented itself to the young princess when she awakened. He appeared to her worthy of her regard; and it was the first time in all her life that ever she looked on any other but Atimir with any attention.

' Every thing assures me, (said the prince of the Peaccable Island to the princess,) that you are the divine Hebe: alas! who besides could boast so many charms?' ' Who, Sir, could so soon inform you, (answered the young princess, getting up, and blushing at the same time,) that I was in this island?' ' A powerful fairy, (replied the young king) who, willing to make me the happiest of men, and this country most fortunate, promised me to conduct you here, and hath permitted me yet more glorious hopes.' ' But I am very sensible, (added he, sighing,) that my fate depends more upon your bounty than hers.'

After these words, to which she answered with a great deal of wit, the prince desired her to go into his chariot, which should carry her to the palace, and out of respect went not into it himself: but as she understood by his discourse, and by his train, that he was the king of that isle, she obliged him to sit by her.

Never any thing appeared so beautiful in one chariot; all the prince's court at that sight could not forbear their applause. While they were on the way, the young prince entertained Hebe with a great deal of wit and tenderness, and the princess, satisfied to find her heart at ease, resumed all her vivacity.

They arrived at the palace, which was some distance from the sea, and built all of Ivory, and covered with agate, all the avenues to which were encompassed with fine canals.

The prince's guards were drawn out in all the courts; in the first they were cloathed in yellow feathers, with head-pieces, bows and arrows, all of silver; in the second, they were cloathed in feathers of a fire-colour, with gilt sabres, adorned with torquoises. When they came into the third court, the guards were cloathed in white feathers, holding in their hands gilded and painted half pikes, adorned with garlands of flowers; for in that country they never were at war, therefore bore no terrible arms.

The prince alighted out of his chariot, and led the amiable Hebe into a magnificent apartment. The court

court was numerous, the ladies beautiful, the men gallant and handsome: and though all the inhabitants of the country were cloathed with feathers, the art of forming them in shades made them very agreeable.

That night the prince of the Peaceable Island made a great entertainment for the beautiful Hebe, which was followed by a concert of sweet flutes, lutes, theorboes and harpsichords; for in that country they loved not noisy instruments. The symphony was very fine; and when it had lasted sometime, a delicate fine voice sung some words which declared the prince's passion, while he gazed on Hebe, to persuade her those words expressed his thoughts.

As it was late when the music left off, the prince led the princess into the apartment appointed for her, which was the finest in the palace; there she found a great number of ladies, whom the prince had named to have the honour to be her attendants.

The prince left the beautiful Hebe, and was the most in love of all men. They put her to bed; the ladies retired, and only left in the chamber those she brought along with her. ‘Who could believe it, (said she to them, when she was at liberty,) my heart is at peace! ‘What God hath calmed my troubles? I love Atimir no longer; I can think, without dying with grief, that he is, perhaps, Illeria’s spouse. Is not all I see a dream? No, (said she, recovering herself a little,) my dreams used not to be so quiet.’ In short, she returned Anguiletta a thousand thanks, and then went to sleep.

The next morning when she awakened, as she opened the bed-curtains, the fairy appeared to her with a smiling air, which she had never observed in her face since that fatal day she asked for love.

‘At last I have happily brought you hither (said the amiable fairy to her) your heart is free, therefore will be content. I have cured you of a cruel passion; but, Hebe, can I be assured that these terrible torments, to which you have been exposed, will make

' you always avoid the fight of the ungrateful Atimir ?'

The young princess promised the fairy every thing, and swore both against love and her false lovers. ' Remember your promises (replied Anguiletta, with an air that left an impression of respect) you will perish with Atimir, if ever you seek to see him again. But every thing here ought to remove a desire so fatal to your life.'

' I will no longer conceal from you what I have resolved in your favour: the prince of this island is my relation; I protect his person and empire: he is young and amiable, and no prince in the world is more worthy of being your husband. Reign then, beautiful Hebe, in his heart and kingdom: the king, your father, gives his consent; I was yesterday at his palace, and acquainted him, and the queen, your mother, with the present state of your fortune, which they have put absolutely under my care.'

The princess had a great mind to have asked the fairy about Ileria and Atimir; but durst not, after so many favours, run the hazard of displeasing her; therefore she only made use of all the wit she had bestowed on her to thank her.

Then somebody coming into the room, the fairy disappeared. As soon as Hebe was up, twelve children, clothed like cupids, brought from the prince twelve baskets of crystal, full of the most agreeable flowers, which only garnished some jewels of a wonderful beauty. In the first basket that was presented to her, this billet was found:

To the Divine HEBE.

' YESTERDAY I swore a thousand times how I loved; the sweet remembrance of which oaths will ever remain, since they were dictated by love, and are supported by your charms.'

After what the fairy had ordered the princess, she comprehended that she ought to accept of her new lover,

as of a prince that was shortly to be her husband.

She received the little loves very favourably; and had hardly dismissed them, when four-and-twenty dwarfs, fantastically, but magnificently clothed, appeared loaded with new presents, that consisted of habits all of feathers: the colours and work of which, with jewels, were so fine, that the princess owned she had never seen any thing so gallant.

She made choice of a rose colour to wear that day; her head-dress was adorned with a plume of feathers of the same colour, and she appeared so charming with this new ornament, that the prince of the Peaceable Island, who came to see her when she was dressed, felt his passion redouble. All the court crowded to admire the princess. At night the prince proposed to the beautiful Hebe to walk in the gardens, which were admirable, where the prince told Hebe, that the fairy had fed him for four years with the hopes of her arrival in the Peaceable Island: ‘but some time after (added the prince) when I pressed her on her promises, she appeared sad, told me, the princess is designed by the king, her father, for another, and not for thee: but if my knowledge deceives me not, she will not be that prince’s, I will tell you more another time.’

‘Some months after, the fairy came again: Fortune favours you, (said she to me) the prince that was to have been, will not be Hebe’s spouse; and in a little time you will see here the most beautiful princess in the world.’

‘Indeed, (replied Hebe, blushing,) I was to have been married to the son of a neighbouring king; but after a great many events, the love he bore my sister made him resolve to go away with her.’

The prince of the Peaceable Island said a thousand tender things to the beautiful Hebe on his happy fate, which according with what the fairy had told him, had brought her into this isle; and hearkened to him with so much the more pleasure, because this discourse interrupted the recital of her adventures; she feared she should

should not be able to speak of her faithless lover, without discovering the tenderness she had had for him.

The prince conducted Hebe into a grotto curiously adorned and embellished with the spoutings of water.

The bottom of the grotto was dark; there were a great number of niches with statutes, representing nymphs and shepherds, which ware hard to be distinguished.

When the princes had been there some time, she heard a delightful sound of instruments. A noble illumination that appeared all on a sudden, discovered to her, that part of those statutes formed that concert; when the others came out, and danced fine and gallant dances, intermixed with tender and agreeable songs; all the performers in this diversion being placed at the bottom of the grotto, surprised the princes more agreeably.

After the dance, savages came in, and served up a stately collation under an arbour of jessamins and orange-flowers.

The entertainment was just over, when all on a sudden the Fairy Anguiletta appeared in the air, in a chariot drawn by four swans; and, descending, pronounced to the prince of the Peaceable Island a charming happiness, in telling him she would have him marry Hebe, and withal, that the princes had promised her to consent.

The prince, transported with joy, doubted at first to whom he should return his first thanks, whether to Hebe or Anguiletta; and though joy permits not of touching expressions like grief, he acquitted himself, however, with a great deal of wit, and a good grace.

The fairy had no mind to leave the prince and princes till the day appointed for their marriage, which was to be in three days; when she made them both costly presents, and went with them, who were followed by all the court, and a great many of the inhabitants of the isle, to the temple of Hymen, which was made of olive branches and palms interlaced together, which, by the fairy's power, never faded.

Hymen was there represented by a statue of white marble, crowned with roses, and raised on an altar adorned only with flowers, and supported by a Cupid of an extraordinary beauty, who, with a smiling air, presented him with a crown of myrtle.

Anguiletta, who built this temple, was willing every thing should be plain, to shew that love alone can render marriage happy. The difficulty is not to unite them together, but as the miracle worthy of a fairy, to join them together for ever in the Peaceable Island; which, contrary to the customs of other countries, can make man and wife loving and constant.

In this temple of Hymen the beautiful Hebe, led by Anguiletta, plighted her faith to the prince of the Peaceable Island, and received his with pleasure. She had not that involuntary inclination for him that she felt for Atimir; but her heart, then exempt from passion, accepted of that spouse by the fairy's order, as a prince worthy of her by his person, and much more by his love. This marriage was celebrated by a thousand gallant entertainments, and Hebe lived happy with a prince that adored her.

In the mean time, the king, Hebe's father, received ambassadors from Atimir, who asked leave to marry the princess Ileria (for his father was dead, and he left absolute master of his kingdom) which was granted with joy.

After this marriage, the queen Ileria asked, by new ambassadors, leave of the king her father, and queen her mother, to come to their court, to beg pardon for a fault which love had made her commit, and for which Atimir's merit was a sufficient excuse.

The king consented, and Atimir and his queen were welcomed on their arrival, with all the demonstrations of joy possible.

A little after, the beautiful Hebe and her charming spouse sent their ambassadors to the king and queen, with the news of their nuptials, which Anguiletta had informed them of before; yet, notwithstanding, they were not received with less pleasure and magnificence.

Atimir

Atimir was then with the king when they presented themselves the first time before him; the lovely image of Hebe was not to be absolutely blotted out of an heart over which she had so great a sway. Atimir could not forbear sighing when he heard of the happiness of the prince of the Peaceable Island; he accused Hebe a thousand times of being inconstant, without thinking at the same time of the cause he had given her.

When the ambassadors of the prince of the Peaceable Island returned crowned with honours, and loaded with presents, they told their princess the great joy the king and queen expressed at their happy marriage.

But withal, (Oh! too sincere relation!) they acquainted Hebe, that the princess Ileria and Atimir were at court. These names, which were so dangerous to their repose, rendered her again uneasy; she was then unhappy, but mortals cannot long preserve a certain felicity.

She was not able to resist her impatience to return to her father's court; which was, as she said, to see the queen her mother: nay, she had even persuaded herself into a belief of it; for how often do they who love deceive themselves in their own thoughts?

Notwithstanding the fairy's threats to oblige her to avoid the sight of Atimir, she proposed that journey to the prince of the Peaceable Island, who at first refused her, for Anguiletta had bid him not let her stir out of his kindom; but she continued her entreaties, and as he adored her, and knew nothing of her passion for Atimir, he could not deny any thing to one he loved so dear.

He thinking to please the beautiful Hebe by a blind complaisance, gave orders for their departure; and never was seen more magnificence than in their equipage, and in their ships.

The wise Anguiletta, provoked at the little regard shewn by Hebe and the prince to her orders, abandoned them to their fate, and never appeared to give them advice, which they had made so little use of.

For the prince and princess, they, after a pleasant voyage, arrived at the court of Hebe's father; where the king and queen's joy to see that fine princess again was very great. They were charmed with the prince of the Peaceable Island, and celebrated their arrival by great rejoicings throughout the whole kingdom; only Ileria groaned when she heard of Hebe's return. And it was decreed, that when they should see one another again, no mention should be made of what was past.

Atimir asked to see Hebe, and seemed to Ileria to desire it with too great an ardour.

The princess Hebe blushed when he came into her chamber; they were both in a confusion, that all their wit was not sufficient to extricate them out of. The king, who was then present, observed it, and joining in their conversation, to make this visit the shorter, proposed walking in the gardens of the palace, and as Atimir durst not offer his hand to Hebe, he made her only a respectful bow, and so retired.

But what were the sentiments and ideas of his heart? All that lively and tender passion he had for Hebe, rekindled in his bosom; he hated Ileria and himself, and never was infidelity attended with more repentance and grief.

At night he waited on the queen, to whom Hebe was paying a visit: and not satisfied with looking at her, endeavoured to speak to her, which she always avoided; but still his eyes informed her too much for her quiet: he continued to shew, by all his actions, that hers had again resumed their empire over him.

Hebe's heart was alarmed; Atimir always appeared to her too lovely; she resolved to fly him, with as much care as he endeavoured to find out her. She never spoke to him, but before the queen, and then never but when she could not absolutely dispense with it; and was determined to persuade the prince, her husband, to return soon to their own dominions: but how difficult a thing is to leave what we love!

One evening as she was engaged in these thoughts, and had shut herself up in her closet, that she might think

think more at her liberty, she found in her pocket a billet, that had been put into it unknown to her, which she opened, and knew to be Atimir's hand, which gave her inexpressible trouble; she thought not to read it, but her heart over-ruled her reason, she looked it over, and found these words in it.

FAIREST HEBE,

' YOU are too insensible of my violent passion, and use me with too much indifference: but since your heart has, in its turn been false, and has followed but too close the example of mine, let it imitate it in its return. Forgive me my princess, and permit me to resume those chains I once wore, when we partook of each other's pains and pleasures.'

' Oh, cruel! (cried the princess) what have I done, that you should endeavour to rekindle in my soul a tenderness that has caused me so much sorrow?' And then her tears interrupted her discourse.

In the mean time Ileria languished under a jealousy too justly grounded, and Atimir, hurried on by his love, was unable to restrain himself any longer. The prince of the Peaceable Island began to discover his passion for Hebe; but was willing to examine farther into Atimir's conduct, before he spoke of it to the princess, whom he adored constantly, and whom he was afraid of informing of that prince's love.

Some days after the receipt of this letter, there were appointed courses, when all the princes, and sprightly youths of the court were to break lances in honour of the ladies.

The king and queen honoured this diversion with their presence. The beautiful Hebe and the princess Ileria were to bestow the prizes; which were a sword, the handle and scabbard of which were covered with diamonds; and a bracelet of most curious diamonds.

All the knights named for the courses appeared with an extraordinary magnificence, mounted on very fine

horses, bearing the colours their mistresses delighted in, with devices on their shields agreeable to the sentiments of their hearts.

The prince of the Peaceable Island was in a costly dress, mounted on a most beautiful dappled horse, with a fine long black tail and mane: in all his equipage the rose-colour appeared, which Hebe very much loved; and on his head-piece, which was very light, there waved a plume of feathers of the same colour. He gained the applause of all the spectators, and appeared so handsome in his bright armour, that Hebe secretly reproached herself a thousand times for the sentiments she had the misfortune to have for another. His train was numerous, clothed after the manner of their own country, very gallant and stately. An esquire carried his shield, on which was this device, an heart pierced with an arrow, and a cupid shooting a great number, to endeavour to make fresh wounds; but all, except the first, seemed to have been drawn in vain; these words were under-written:

'I fear no other.'

The colours and device of the prince of the Peaceable Island soon discovered that he was Hebe's knight, and that as such he would enter the lists. Every body was taken up with his magnificence, when Atimir came forward, mounted on a black fiery steed, that appeared very stately. His colour that day was dark green, intermixed neither with gold, silver, nor jewels, only he had a plume of rose-coloured feathers on his head piece; and the other affected a great carelessness in his apparel; he had so graceful a mien, and managed his horse so well, and withal had so lofty an air, that nobody could forbear looking at him: on his shield, which he carried himself, appeared a lion, who trampled his chains under his feet, and bound himself with others more weighty, with these words:

'Worthy only of me.'

Atimir's

Atimir's train consisted of the principle lords of his court, who were cloathed in dark green, laced with silver, and covered over with jewels; and though they were all handsome and well-shaped, yet it was easy to judge by that prince's air, he was born to command them.

The different emotions the sight of this prince produced in the hearts of Hebe and Ileria, and the jealousy the prince of the Peaceable Island conceived, when he saw the plume on Atimir's casque of the same colour with his own, are not to be expressed; the reading of the device compleated his rage, the effects of which he then stifled till a better opportunity.

The king and queen soon took notice, both of the boldness and imprudence of Atimir, and were very angry; but it was not then a time to shew it. The courses began with the soundings of trumpets, and rended the air with their echoes: which were fine, and all the knights shewed their address; and the prince of the Peaceable Island, though possessed with an outrageous jealousy, signalized himself, and was proclaimed conqueror.

Atimir, who knew that the first prize was to be given by Ileria, never disputed the victory with the prince of the Peaceable Island: he was declared victor by the judges of the field, and advanced gracefully, with the acclamations and praises of all the spectators, to the place where the king and princesses sat, to receive the bracelet; which the princess Ileria presented to him, and he took with a good grace; then paying his respects to the king, queen, and princess, he returned to the lists.

The melancholy Ileria observing but too well the disdain the light Atimir shewed for the prize she was to give, sighed grievously; and the beautiful Hebe felt in her breast a secret joy, which all her reason could not resist.

The second course began with the same success as the first, wherein the prince of the Peaceable Island, animated by the sight of Hebe, did wonders, and was declared victor again? when Atimir, vexed to be a spectator of his rival's glory, and flattered with the

thought of receiving the prize from Hebe's hand, went and presented himself at the end of the lists.

The two rivals looked on each other scornfully; and that course between two such great princes was celebrated by the new trouble it caused the two princesses. The princes ran one against the other with equal advantage, and broke their lances without any disorder. The shouts of the spectators redoubled, and they without giving their horses time to breathe, returned to take fresh lances, and ran with the same success and address as at first. The king, who feared lest fortune should declare one of them victors, sent presently to tell them, that they ought to be satisfied with the glory they had gained, and to desire them to put an end to the courses.

When the person the king sent, came up to them, they heard him with a great deal of impatience, especially Atimir; who taking upon him to speak, said, ' Go tell the king, I should be unworthy of the honour he does me, in concerning himself with my glory, if I should suffer a conqueror.' ' Let us see then (said the prince of the Peaceable Island, spurring on his horse with great ardour,) which merits most the kings esteem, and the favours of fortune.

The messenger was not returned to the king, before the two rivals, urged on by sentiments more prevalent than the prize, began the course; wherein fortune favoured the audacious Atimir, and pronounced him victor; the prince of the Peaceable Island's horse, wearied with the courses he had made, falling down, and throwing his master on the sand: how great was Atimir's joy, and that unfortunate prince's rage! He got up quickly, and going up to his rival before any came to them, ' You have overcome me in sports, Atimir, (said he, with an air sufficient to shew his passion;) but with my sword I will decide our differences.' ' I consent, (replied the fiery Atimir,) and will meet you to-morrow at sun-rise, in the wood, at the end of the palace-gardens.' As they had made an end of these words, the judges of the field came up to them; whereupon they disguised their mutual rage, lest the king should prevent their designs.

The prince of the Peaceable Island mounted his horse again, and rid with all speed to leave the fatal place, where Atimir had vanquished him. In the mean time that prince went to receive the prize of course from Hebe, who presented it to him with a confusion that discovered the different commotions of her soul; and Atimir, in taking it, committed all the extravagance of a man very much in love.

The king and queen, who had their eyes fixed on them, observing him all the time, and returned to their palace very much dissatisfied with the ending of that day. Atimir, possessed with his passion, went out of the lists without any attendants; and Ileria, outrageous with grief and jealousy, went back to her apartments.

Various then were the thoughts of Hebe: 'I must go hence, (said she to herself,) since no other remedy can be found to prevent the misfortunes that I foresee.'

At the same time the king and queen resolved to desirous Atimir to go home, to avoid the new troubles his love might create; which same proposition they likewise determined to make to the prince of the Peaceable Island, that neither party might take umbrage thereat. But the princes hasty resolutions prevented this prudent foresight; for while they deliberated on their departure, the others prepared for the combat.

As soon as Hebe came back from the courses, she asked for the prince, her spouse, who they told her was in the gardens of the palace, very melancholy, and willing to be alone. The beautiful Hebe thought it her duty to go and comfort him after his ill-fortune; so, without staying in her apartment; she went into the gardens, followed by some of her women.

She was looking for the prince, when entering into a shady walk, she espied the amorous Atimir, who transported with his passion, and regarding nothing else, fell on his knees some distance from the princess, and drawing the sword he that day received from her. 'Hear me, charming Hebe, (said he,) or let me die at your feet.'

The women, frightened at this action of the prince, threw themselves upon him, endeavouring to take away his sword, which he turned with great rage on the other side. Hebe, the unhappy Hebe, was for flying: but how great must our reason be, that can force us from what we love!

The desire of keeping this adventure a secret, with her design to entreat Atimir to strive to cure a passion so fatal to them both, and the compassion so moving an object created, all contributed to stay the princess, who made up to the prince; her presence suspended his fury; his sword he let fall at her feet, and never more trouble, love, and grief, appeared at once in so short a conversation.

Words are not tender enough to express what these two unhappy lovers then endured: Hebe, uneasy to see herself with Atimir, and so nigh the prince of the Peaceable Island, made a great effort on herself to leave him, charging him never to see her more. How cruel was this command! Had not Atimir called to mind the engagement he lay under to fight the prince of the Peaceable Island, he had a thousand times turned the sword upon himself; but alas! he chose rather to die, revenging himself on his rival.

The fair Hebe retired instantly to her apartment, the more securely to avoid the presence of Atimir: 'Merciless Fairy, (cried she,) you only told me of death, if ever I saw this unhappy prince; but now I feel torments a thousand times more grievous!' Then sending to seek for the prince in the gardens and the palace, and not finding him, her uneasiness increased; they sought him all the night to no purpose; for he hid himself in a hut in the midst of the wood, that he might not be prevented from meeting at the place appointed, which he repaired to at sun-rise, were Atimir arrived soon after. These two rivals, impatient to revenge themselves, and to gain the victory, drew their swords; which was the first time the prince of the Peaceable Island ever made use of his, since there never was any war in his dominions.

Nevertheless

Nevertheless, he appeared not the less formidable enemy to Atimir; for though he had but little experience, he had courage, was in love, and fought like a man that despised death; while Atimir maintained the great reputation he had so worthily gained.

These two princes were animated by passions too much different, not to render the end of this duel fatal, for after they had a long time maintained an equal advantage, they made too such furious thrusts at each other, that both fell on the grass, which they died with their blood.

The prince of the Peaceable Island fainted away instantly with the loss of his; and Atimir, mortally wounded, pronounced the name of Hebe as he expired.

Some of those persons who were sent to look for the prince of the Peaceable Island, arrived at that fatal place, and were seized with horror at so dismal a sight.

The princess Hebe, drawn by her disquiet, was going into the gardens, when hearing the shrieks of people who pronounced confusedly the names of the two princes, she hereupon ran and found those so sad and dismal objects: she thought that the prince her husband was dead as well as Atimir, who at that time were both alike to her; when, after having looked some time on those unhappy princes, she cried out dolefully, ‘ Ye precious lives, which were sacrificed for me, I will revenge you by the loss of my own.’ After these words she fell on the fatal sword Atimir received from her, and had pierced her breast before the people (who were amazed at this cruel adventure) could hinder her.

Just as she expired, the Fairy Anguilettta appeared, who, touched with so many misfortunes which she had opposed with all her power, accused fate, and could not forbear shedding tears. Then thinking of assisting the prince of the Peaceable Island, whom she knew was not dead, she cured him of his wounds, and transported him instantly into his own isle; where, by the wonderful gift she had bestowed on it, that prince was consoled for the loss he had sustained, and forgot his passion for Hebe.

The king and queen, who had not the like assistance, gave themselves up entirely to grief, which was only to be worn off by time. And as for Ileria, her despair cannot be expressed, who was always both faithful to her grief, and the ungrateful Atimir.

When Anguiletta had transported the prince of the Peaceable Island into his own dominions, she touched with her wand the unfortunate remains of the lovely Atimir and the beautiful Hebe, who in an instant were changed into two trees of an admirable beauty, which the Fairy named *Charms*, to preserve for ever the remembrance of those which shone so bright in these unhappy lovers.

THE

ROYAL RAM,

OR, THE

WISHES.

IN those happy days when Fairies were common, there lived a king who had three beautiful young daughters, who were all deserving; but the youngest whose name was Miranda, being the most amiable, and her father's favourite, was allowed as many clothes in a month, as her sisters had in a year; but she being so generous as to let them partake with her, it made no difference amongst them.

The king having had neighbours, who, tired with a long peace, obliged him to raise an army, and to take the field, left his daughters with a governante in a castle,

where

where they might hear news from him every day; and when he had subdued his enemies, and drove them out of his dominions, came to the castle to see his Miranda, whom he doated on. The three princesses bespoke themselves every one a robe of sattin; the eldest's was green, adorned with emeralds; the second's was blue, set off with turquoises; and the younge's white, bedecked with diamonds. And in these dresses they went to meet the king, and to congratulate him on his victories.

When he saw them so beautiful and gay, he embraced them all tenderly, but especially Miranda. After a magnificent entertainment that was served up, the king, who loved to draw consequences from the most trivial matters, asked the eldest, why she put on a green gown? 'Sir, (said she,) after hearing of your great deeds, I thought green might express my joy, and the hopes of your return.' 'That's very well, (said the king.)' And you, daughter, (continued he to the second,) how came you to put on a blue gown? 'To shew, sir, (said she,) we ought to implore the gods in your favour; and that in seeing you, I behold the heavens and the brightest stars.' 'Now, (said the king,) you speak like an oracle. And you, Miranda, (said the king,) what made you dress yourself in white?' 'Because, (said she,) it becomes me better than any other colour.' How, (said the king, a little angrily,) was that only your design? 'I had that of pleasing you, (said the princess,) and I think I need no other.' Whereupon the king was mightily pleased at her turn of thought, and said, That since he had eaten a pretty deal at supper, he would not go to bed so soon, therefore he would have them tell him their dreams the night before his return.

The eldest said, she dreamed he brought her a gown, the gold and jewels of which were brighter than the sun; the second said, she dreamed that he brought her a golden spinning-wheel and distaff, for her to spin herself some shifts; and the youngest said, she dreamed he married her second sister off, and, on the wedding-day, held a golden ewer, and said, 'Come Miranda, come and wash you.'

The king, who was angry at this dream, knit his brow, made a thousand wry faces, and went into his chamber, where throwing himself upon his bed, he could not forget his daughter's dream: 'This insolent baggage, (said he,) would make me her domestic slave; ' I am not amazed now, why she put on a white gown ' with thinking of me; she looks on me as one unworthy ' of her reflections; but I'll prevent her ill designs.' Hereupon he got up in a rage; and though it was not yet day, he sent for the captain of his guards, and said to him; ' You have heard of Miranda's dream, which ' forebodes some treason; therefore I would have you ' take her presently, and carry her into the forest and ' kill her, and afterwards bring me her heart and ' tongue: If you deceive me, I'll put you to the most ' cruel death I can think of.' The captain of the guards was very much surprised at so barbarous an order, but durst not seem averse to it, lest the king should take away his commission, but promised him to perform it. Then going to the princess's chamber, which he had much ado to get to, it being so very early, he told her, the king had sent him for her. Whereupon she rose presently: a little Moor, that she called Patpatay, held up her train, and her young ape, named Grabugeon, and a little dog, which she called Tintin, ran by her side.

The captain of the guard carried her into the garden, telling her the king was taking a little fresh air; and then pretending to look for him, and not finding him, told her, he was without dispute gone from thence into the forest. Then opening the little door that led into the forest, and day coming on, the princess observed that her conductor shed some tears, and seemed melancholy; whereupon she said to him, with an air of sweetness, ' What is the matter, you seem so much afflicted?' ' Alas! madam, (cried he) who can be otherwise? The king has ordered me to kill you here, and to carry ' him your heart and tongue, or else he will put me to ' death.' At these words the poor princess turned pale, and fell a-crying, and in that condition looked like a lamb;

lamb that was going to the slaughter; then fixing her eyes on the captain, without any anger, said to him, ‘ Have you courage enough to kill me, who never did you any injury in my life, but rather always spoke to the king in your favour? But if I have deserved my father’s anger, I submit without murmuring. Alas! I have shew him but too much love and respect, for him to complain without injustice.’ ‘ Fear not fair princess, (said the officer) I’ll sooner suffer the death I am threatened with, than be guilty of so barbarous an action; but when I am gone you will not be more safe: we must find out some expedient to persuade the king you are dead.’

‘ What way can we find out? (replied Miranda.) He will not be satisfied, unless he sees my tongue and heart. At that Patypata, who stood by and heard all, without being observed by either the princess or the captain, advanced boldly, and throwing herself at Miranda’s feet, said, ‘ I come, madam, to offer you my life, let me be the sacrifice: I shall be but too well pleased to die for so good a mistress.’ ‘ I have no need of so tender a proof of thy friendship, (said the princess, kissing her) thy life ought now to be as dear to me as my own. Whereupon Grabugeon came forward, and said, ‘ You are in the right, my princess, to love so faithful a slave as Patypata; she may be more serviceable to you than I can, therefore I offer you my heart and tongue with joy.’ ‘ Oh my pretty Grabugeon, (replied Miranda,) I cannot bear the thoughts of taking thy life away.’ With that Tintin cry’d out, that it was insupportable to so faithful a dog as he was, that any other but him should lay down their life for his mistress; and thereupon arose a great dispute between Patypata, Grabugeon, and Tinto: in short, Grabugeon being quicker than the rest, clim’d up to the top of a high tree, and threw himself down, and broke his neck; and the Captain of the Guard, with a great deal of persuasion, got leave of the princess to cut out his tongue; but it proved too small to venture to cheat the king with it.

Alas!

‘ Alas! my poor little ape, said the princess, thou hast lost thy life without doing me any service! That honour is reserved for me,’ interrupted the Moor; and at the same time cut her throat with the knife that Grabugeon’s tongue was cut out with. The officer was for carrying her tongue, but that it was too black to pass for Myranda’s. ‘ How unfortunate am I, (said the princess, weeping,) thus to lose what I love, and not to be one whit the better for it.’ ‘ If you had accepted of my proposition, said Tintin, you would have none to have griev’d for but me, and I should have had the satisfaction of being regretted alone.’ Whereupon Miranda kiss’d her little dog, and griev’d so much, that she swoon’d away, and when she came to herself found her dog dead, her conductor gone, and herself left with her three dead favourites: which she buried in a hole that was ready dug hard by a tree, and then bethought herself of her own security.

As the forest was not far from her father’s court, it was not safe for her to stay there long, lest she should be known by some of the passengers, therefore she made all the haste she could to get out of it; but the forest was so large, and the sun so hot, that she was ready to die with heat, fear, and weariness; and was in continual apprehensions lest her father should follow and kill her: but still continued going forwards, making lamentable complaints, having her gown almost torn off, and her skin scratched by the thorns and brambles. At last hearing the bleating of sheep. ‘ Without doubt, (said she to herself,) here are some shepherds with the flocks, who may direct me to some hamlet where I may disguise myself in some country dress: for alas! continued she, princes are not always the most happy: who believes that I am a run-away? that my father, without any cause or reason, seeks my life? and that I, to save it, must be forced to disguise myself?’ While she was making these reflections, she arrived at the place from whence she heard the bleating; but how great was her surprise, when she came to a spacious plain, to see a large Ram, as white as snow; his horns were

were gilt, a garland of flowers fastened about his neck, his legs were adorned with bracelets of pearls of a prodigious size, and he was laid on orange flowers, and shaded from the heat of the sun by a pavilion of cloth of gold. An hundred sheep finely adorned were waiting about him, some drinking coffee, sherbet, and lemonade; others eating strawberries and cream, and sweetmeats; and others again playing at lasquenet and basset; some had rich collars of gold, with a gallant device, and some had their ears bored, and full of ribbons, Miranda was so much amazed, that she was perfectly motionless, and looked about for the shepherd of such an extraordinary flock, when the beautiful ram came bounding and skipping, and said, ' Approach, divine princess, be not afraid of such gentle pacific creatures as we are.' ' What prodigy is it (said the princess, stepping back) to hear sheep speak?' ' Alas! madam, (said the ram) your ape and dog spoke, and why is it more strange that we should?' ' A fairy (answered Miranda) bestowed that gift upon them' ' And might not the like adventure attend us? (replied the ram, smiling:) but my princess what brought you hither?' ' A thousand misfortunes, (replied Miranda) I am the most miserable person in the world, and seek an asylum to avoid the rage of a father.' ' Come, madam, with me (replied the ram) I will afford you one, where you shall be known by none, and be absolute mistress.' ' But I am not able to follow you, (replied she) I am so weary.' Whereupon the ram ordered his chariot, and soon after appeared six goats, harnessed to a gourd shell, large enough for two persons to sit in with ease, and lined with velvet. The princess placed herself in it, admiring an equipage so novel, and the ram got in after her, and then drove to the cavern's mouth, which was stopped by a large stone, which, on the ram's touching with his foot, removed. After which, he told the princess she might go alone without danger; which she would hardly have ever consented to, had not her fear of being taken prompted her to it; and upon that account, she never hesitated, but followed her conductor.

As the steps were very numerous, the princes thought that she was either going to pay a visit to their antipodes, or the Elysian shades; but was much more surprised when she discovered a vast plain, enamelled with various flowers, which excelled all the perfumes she had ever smelt, surrounded with a large river of orange flower water. In the midst of this plain were fountains of wine, rosa-folis, and other exquisite liquors, which formed cascades and other pleasant purling brooks, and here and there holts of trees, which served for shelter to a variety of choice birds and fowls, as partridges, quails, pheasants, ortolans, turkeys, pullets, &c. and in some parts, the air was darkened with showers of biscuits, blanched almonds, tarts, cheesecakes, marrow-puddings, and all manner of sweetmeats, both wet and dry; and in short, with all necessaries of life, with great plenty of crown-pieces, guineas, pearls, and diamonds. Without doubt, the rarity and usefulness of this rain would have brought the Royal Ram a great many visitors, if he had been desirous of company; but all the writers that mention him, assure us, that he chose to be retired, and was as grave as any Roman senator.

As it was the pleasantest season of the year when Miranda arrived there, she saw no other palace than what chambers, halls, closets, orange-trees, sessamine, honey-fuchsias, and rose-trees formed by intermixing their boughs. The princely ram told Miranda, that he had reigned sovereign there several years, and had sufficient cause to be afflicted; but that he restrained from tears, that he might not remind her of her misfortunes. ‘ Your manner of treatment, charming sheep, (said she) is somewhat so generous, that I can’t not express my acknowledgement enough; that I must confess, that what I see seems so extraordinary, I know not what to think of it.’ No sooner had she pronounced these words, but there appeared a troop of beautiful nymphs, who presented her with fruit out of amber baskets; but when she went near them, they insensibly moved from her; and at last reaching out her hand to take hold of one of them, she soon perceived they

they were only fantoms. ‘ Alas! (said she, weeping) ‘ where am I, and what are these?’ At that instant the Royal Ram, for so I must call him, returning, having left her some moments, and seeing her shed tears, remained motionless, and ready to die at her feet.

‘ What is the matter with my beautiful princess? ‘ (said he) have I any way failed in the respect th^t t
is due to you?’ ‘ No, (said she) but I am not used to live among the dead, and with sheep that talk: every thing here terrifies me; and though my obligation is great to you for bringing me hither, yet I must beg one favour more of you, to conduct me back.’ ‘ Fright not yourself, (replied he) vouchsafe to hear me quietly, and you shall know my deplorable adventure.’

‘ I was born a prince: a great race of kings, who were my ancestors, left me in possession of one of the most beautiful kingdoms in the world: my subjects loved me, my neighbours both fear'd and envy'd me, and I was esteem'd with some justice. My person was not indifferent to those that saw me; and being a great lover of hunting, and as I was one day pursuing a stag, and separated from my attendants, the stag took into a pond: I plunged my horse in after him with too much imprudence, as well as rashness; but, instead of finding the water cold, I found it extraordinary hot, and the pond becoming dry all on a sudden, there issued out of a cliff a terrible fire, and I fell to the bottom from off the precipice, where I could see nothing but flames. I believed myself lost, when I heard a voice say, They must be greater flames that warm thy heart, ungrateful man. Alas! cried I, who is that who complains of my coolness? An unfortunate wretch, replied the voice, who adores you without hope. At the same time the fire went out, and I saw a fairy, whom I knew from my youth, and whose age and ugliness always frightened me: she was leaning on a young slave of incomparable beauty, who was loaded with chains of gold, to denote her

her slavery. What prodigy is this, said I to Ragotte, which was the fairy's name; was this done by your orders? Alas! by whose orders else do you think? replied she? Have you never known my sentiments till now? Must I be forced to explain myself—my eyes used never to fail of conquests; have they now lost all their power? Consider how low I stoop, 'tis a fairy that makes this confession, and kings are, in respect to them, but as ants. I am entirely at your pleasure, said I to her, with an air and tone that expressed some impatience; but what is it that you ask? Is it my crown, my cities, or my treasure? Oh wretch, replied she, disdainfully, I can make my skullions, when I please, greater than thee: I ask thy heart; my eyes have asked it a thousand times, and thou hast not understood them, or at least wouldst not. Were though engaged with any other, I should not interrupt thee in thy amours; but I have too great an interest in thee not to discover the indifference of thy heart. Ah! grant me thy love, added she, shutting her mouth, to render it the more agreeable, and rolling her eyes about, I will be thy dear Ragotte, will add twenty kingdoms to that you possess, an hundred towers of gold, five hundred full of silver, and whatever thou canst desire besides.

Madam Ragotte, said I to her, I beg of you, by all the charms that render you lovely, to set me at liberty, and then we'll see what I can do to please you. Oh traitor! cried she, if thou lovest me, thou wouldst not mourn so much after thy own kingdom; but be content to live in a grotto, wood, or desert. Do not believe me to be so great a novice; thou thinkest of stealing away, but I tell you for your comfort, you must stay here; and the first thing you shall do, shall be to keep my sheep, which have as much wit, and speak as well as though dost. At the same time she brought me into this plain, where we are now, and shewed me her flock, which I looked on but little; for that beautiful slave that was with her took up all my regard, and my eyes betrayed me; which the cruel

' cruel Ragotte observing, flew upon her, and stabb'd
' her in the eye with her bodkin, and so deprived that
' adorable object of her life. At this dismal sight, I fell
' on Ragotte, and clapping my hand upon my sword,
' was going to sacrifice her to the manes of that dear
' slave, had she not rendered me motionless by her art.
' My effort being vain, I fell on the ground, and en-
' deavoured to kill myself, to deliver myself from that
' wretched state I was reduced to; when she, with an
' ironical smile, said to me, I will make you feel my
' power; you are at present a lion, but shall, ere long,
' be a sheep. Whereupon touching me with her wand,
' I found myself metamorphosed, such as you see me;
' but retained both my speech, and those sentiments of
' grief which I owe to my unhappy state. Thou shalt
' be five years a sheep, (continued she) and absolute
' master of this sweet abode: while I, separate from
' thee, and never beholding thy agreeable form, shall
' think on nothing but the hatred I bear thee.' Here-
upon she disappeared; and if any thing could have soft-
ened my misfortunes, or given any allay to my dis-
grace, 'twas her absence.

The sheep she spoke of acknowledged me to be their king, told me all their misfortunes, how they displeased the fairy, how she had composed a flock of them, and that they all underwent the same punishment. But (added he) when their time is expired, they will resume their own forms, and leave the flock; and for those who are Rigotta's rivals, or enemies, whom she has killed, they abide here an age before they return into the world again: of which number the young slave is, whom I told you of. I have seen her several months together, but she never speaks to me; and, when I approach'd towards her, it grieved me when I knew it was only a shadow: but having observed one of my flock always by that phantom, I understood he was her lover, whom Ragotte, jealous of the tender impressions they had made on each other, had taken from her.

This was the reason that made me remove from that fairy, and for these last three years, think of nothing but

but my liberty, which was what engaged me so often to the forest, where I sometimes have seen you, fair princess, driving your chaite, like Diana, in her silver chariot, and at other times mounted on a fiery steed, riding over the plains with the princesses and ladies of the court, and like another, always sure to gain the prize. Alas! if at those times I durst have spoke, what fine things should I have said, when my heart offered up its secret vows? But how would you have received the declaration of an unhappy sheep like me.

Miranda was so much concerned at what she heard, that she hardly knew what answer to make; however, paying him some civilities, which gave him some hopes, she told him, she should not be so much afraid of those shades, since they were to come to life again: ‘ But alas! continued she) if my poor Patypata, my dear Grabugeon, and my pretty Tintin, who died to serve me, were to meet with the like fate, I should not be so much concerned here.’

Tho’ the Royal Rani underwent great disgraces, yet had he a great many admirable privileges, ‘ Go, (said he) to his first squire, who was a sheep of a good mein, go fetch the Moor, the monkey, and the little Dog; their shades may divert our princess.’ Soon after Miranda saw them; and though they came not nigh enough to be touched by her, yet their presence was some comfort to her. In short the Royal Ram, who was endued with all the wit and delicacy proper to support an agreeable conversation, was so passionately in love with Miranda, that she began to have some regard for him, and to make some returns; for what can be displeasing in a beautiful, kind, caressing sheep, especially when known to be a king, whose metamorphosis was to have an end? Thus the princess passed her days in the sweet expectation of a more happy fate, while the gallant Ram, whose thoughts were solely bent on her, made entertainments, concerts of music, and did every thing that was in his power to divert her; his troop assisted him in them, and the shades contributing somewhat thereunto.

One evening, when the couriers arrived, for he was very fond of news, and always had the best, they told him, that the eldest sister of the princess Miranda, was going to marry a great prince, and that the nuptials were to be very magnificent. ‘ Alas! (cried the young princess) how unfortunate am I, not to see such fine things? I am here under ground with ghosts and sheep, while my sister, who will be dressed as fine as a queen, will have all the court made to her, and I shall be the only one who shall not partake of her joy.’ ‘ Madam, why do you complain? (said the Royal Ram to her) Have I denied your going to the wedding? Go, when you please; but give me your word, you will come again: if you deny me this, you shall see me expire at your feet; for my love is too violent for me to support myself when I shall lose you.’ Miranda promised him nothing should prevent her return. He gave her an equipage suitable to her birth: she was dressed very richly, and neglected nothing that might set off her charms; she got into a chariot of mother of pearl, drawn by six creatures that were half griffins, and newly arrived from the antipodes, and was attended by a great number of officers that were richly dressed, and who had been sent a great way to make up her train.

With this equipage she arrived at the king her father’s court, just when they were celebrating the marriage; as soon as she entered, she surprised all that saw her with the lustre of her beauty and jewels, and heard nothing but acclamations in her own praise. The king looking at her with great attention and pleasure, which put her into some fear lest he should know her; but he was so much prepossessed with her death, that he had not the least idea of her. Nevertheless, the apprehensions of being stopped, prevented her staying till the ceremony was over, and made her go away suddenly, leaving a box of jewels behind her, whereupon these words were written, These Jewels are for the new-married couple: and when they opened it, there was nothing in it. The king, who had flattered himself with some hopes, and was desirous to know who she was, was in the utmost

most despair when he knew she was gone, and ordered his officer, whenever she came again, to shut the gates and keep her in. Though Miranda was not long absent, yet it seemed an age to the Royal Ram, who waited for her by a fountain side in the thickest of the forest, where he had brought out immense riches to offer her as an acknowledgement of her return. As soon as he saw her, he ran towards her, skipping and bounding, caressing her in this manner a thousand times, laid down at her feet, kissed her hand, told her his disquiets and impatience; wherein his passion afforded him so much eloquence, that the princess was charmed with it.

Some time afterwards the king married his second daughter, and Miranda being informed of it, desired the Ram to let her go again; who at that proposition, was extremely grieved; a secret foresight prepossessed him with his misfortune; but as it is not always in our power to prevent what we foresee, so his complaisancy to the princess overbalancing his interest in her, he was not able to deny her. ‘ You will leave me, Madam,’ (said he) ‘ but this proceeds more from my ill fortune than from you; I consent to your desires, since I never could make you a greater sacrifice.’ She assured him she would stay no longer than she had done before: and she would be as much concerned as himself to be detained; and desired him not to make himself uneasy. In short, she had the same equipage as before, and arrived there just as the ceremony began. Her presence, notwithstanding their attention to the ceremony, occasioned a general shout of joy and admiration, and drew the eyes of all the princes upon her; who found her beauty so extraordinary and uncommon, that they could hardly believe her to be mortal. The king was overjoyed to see her again, and never took his eyes off from her but once, to give orders to lock up all the gates. When the ceremony was almost over, the princess got up suddenly to steal out of the crowd, but was very much surprised and vexed to find all the gates shut.

The king went up to her with great respect, and a

submis-

submission that gave her some encouragement, desiring her not to deprive him so soon of the pleasure of seeing her, and to honour him at his court with her presence. Then leading her into a magnificent hall, where all the court was, he himself held a golden basin full of water for her to wash her hands in. At this the princess, who was no longer mistress of her transport, threw herself at his feet; and embracing his knees, said, ‘ See, sir, ‘ my dream is fulfilled; you have held a basin for me ‘ to wash in, the day of my sister’s wedding, without ‘ any misfortune attending, you.’

The king soon knew her to be his daughter Miranda, and embracing her, and shedding some tears, said, ‘ Alas! my dear child, can you forget the cruelty of a father, who would have sacrificed your life, because he thought your dream denoted the loss of his crown? It shall be so, (continued he) since both your sisters are married, and have each a crown, mine shall be yours.’ And at that instant rising up, he put the crown on the princess’s head, and then said, ‘ The gods preserve the queen Miranda.’ Whereupon the whole court gave a great shout of joy, and her two sisters came and hung about her neck, and embraced her a thousand times. Miranda was so much overjoyed, that she both cried and laughed, embraced one and talked to another, thanked the king, and asked for the captain of the guards, to whom she was obliged for all; and being told that he was dead, was very much grieved thereat. When they were at the table, the king desired to hear what had happened to her from the day whereon those fatal orders were given; which she acquiescing with, related her whole story, without omitting the least circumstance. But while she was thus engaged with the king and her sisters, the time of her return was elapsed, and the amorous Ram became so uneasy, that he was no longer master of himself, and seeing that she came not again, said to himself, ‘ My unhappy form of a sheep is displeasing to her; alas! too unfortunate lover, what shall I do without Miranda; Ragotte, inhuman fairy, how great is thy revenge, for my indifference towards

thee.' Complaining in this manner, and seeing night approaching, without any appearance of his princess's coming, he ran to the palace and asked for Miranda; but as every body had heard of his adventure, and were unwilling that the princess should go back again with him, they refused him the sight of her in so rude a manner, that he fetched sighs, and made complaints capable of piercing the hearts of all that heard him, except the soldiers that kept the gates; and at last, overcome with his grief, laid himself down and died.

The king, who knew nothing of this deep tragedy, proposed to his daughter to ride in a chariot through all the streets in the city, to shew her to her subjects; but what a dismal sight was it to her, when they got out of the gates of the palace, to see her dear sheep stretched on the ground void of life? She jumped with precipitation out of the chariot, ran to him, cried over him, and bemoaned the death of the Royal Ram, which she knew was owing to her not being so good as her word, and in her despair thought to have partook of his fate.

The fairy Lauretina, who had presided over their births, sensibly affected at the lovers' unfortunate situation, came to their relief, and with a touch of her talisman, not only restored the Royal Ram to life, but to his natural form as a beautiful prince. The good old king, happy in his wishes for his daughter, finding the prince royally descended, consented to their union; and in full court made them heirs to his kingdom.

Thus we see by virtue and perseverance, though calamities may surround us.—Yet if we are good, we shall ultimately be happy.

G R A C I O S A

AND

P E R C I N E T.

THERE was a king and queen who had only one daughter. Her beauty, her sweetness of temper, and her wit, which were incomparable, caused her parents to give her the name of Graciosa. She was her mother's sole delight; who ordered new garments for her every morning throughout the year, either of cloth of gold, velvet or fattin. Yet though she was dressed in the richest manner, she was not proud, nor vain-glorious. She spent the morning with learned persons, who taught her all manner of sciences; and in the afternoon she was employed at her needle, in company with the queen. At dinner and supper she was served in plate, and the table was spread with dishes of sweetmeats, and all manner of confectionary: so that she was said to be the most happy princess in the world.

There was in the same court an old maid, but very rich, called the dutches Grognon, every way a most frightful creature to look upon; her hair was red as fire; she had a face dreadfully broad, and covered over with large pimples; of both her eyes that formerly she had, there nothing remained but continual b'ear; her mouth was so wide as if she would have devoured all the world; only those fears ceased, when people saw she had no teeth: she was hunch-back'd and crump shou'der'd both before and behind, and lame of both legs. This sort of mon-

sters bear a great malice to all those that are lovely and beautiful. She mortally hated Graciosa upon this account, and retired from court that she might not hear the continual praises bestowed on her charms. She lived in a particular castle of her own, not far distant; and when any person who came to visit her, spoke in praise of the princess, she would cry out in a violent passion, 'tis false, 'tis false; she is not a bit handsome; I have more charms in my little finger than she has in her whole body.

In the mean time the queen fell sick and died; and the princess Graciosa was very near following her, such was her grief for the loss of so good a mother. The king also no less bewailed his fatal divorce from so dear and loving a wife; he shut himself up in his palace for a whole year together; till at length his physicians, fearing lest he should impair his health, besought him for his own good to take the air, and divert himself. In compliance with this advice, he one day went a hunting, but the weather being extremely hot, and perceiving a fair castle not far off, upon the purlieus of the forest, thither he made with all his train, and went to repose himself.

Immediately the dutchess Grognon, having notice of the king's arrival, (for to her it was that the castle belonged) made hast to receive him, and told him that the coolest part of the castle was a large handsome under-room, to which she desired his majesty would give her leave to conduct him. Accordingly the king went along with her, and seeing in the room about two hundred pipes all in rows one above another, he asked her whether it were for her own use only that she made such large provision. ' Yes, sir, (said she,) I provide for none but myself and family; I should be very glad if your majesty would be pleased to taste my liquors; here is Canary, St. Laurent, Champaigne, Hermitage, Rivesalte, Rosa solas, Peuficot, Fenouillet; which will your majesty make choice of?' ' Frankly, (said the king,) I hold your Champaigne wine to be the best.' Grognon immediately took a little hammer,

and

and having given a rap or two at the head of the pipe, it opened, and out came a million of pistoles: ha! what's the meaning of this, said she, with a smile! and knocking at the head of another pipe, out flew as many double louis d'ors as would have filled a bushel. Good God! what's all this for, said she, in a feign'd astonishment! From thence passed to the third, she knocked in the same manner, and there issued as many pearls and diamonds as covered the floor. ‘ Well, sir, (said she ‘ to the king,) this is past my understanding; some body must certainly have robbed me of my finewines, and filled up the vessels with these trifles.’ ‘ Trifles! (cried the king in amazement) in the name of prophecy, madam Grognon, do you call these trifles? Why, woman, these trifles are enough to buy ten cities as big as London.’ ‘ Well then, sir (said she) to be plain with you, all these pipes are full of gold and precious stones, and I will make you master of them upon condition that you will marry me.’ ‘ A match, (cried the king who loved money better than any thing) this very day, if you please, before we stir out of the castle. But stay (said she) there is one condition more: I will be mistress of your daughter as her mother was: she shall be wholly at my command, you shall leave me the sole disposal of her.’ ‘ Agreed, (cried the king) you shall be mistress of my daughter too: here is my hand upon it.’ Grognon gave him her hand: after which, having given him the key of the wealthy cellar, they took their leaves.

So soon as the king arrived at his pa'ace, Graciosa hearing that her father was returned, ran to meet him; embraced him, and asked him whether he had had good sport; to which her father replied, ‘ I have caught a pigeon alive.’ ‘ Oh, sir, (said she,) give it to me, and I will make it my care.’ ‘ That cannot be, (continued the king) for that I may more intelligibly explain myself, I must tell thee, that I have met the dutchess of Grognon, and taken her to be my wife.’ ‘ Good heavens! (cried Graciosa, in her first transports) do you call her a pigeon, who is ten thousand times

' uglier than an owl?'—' Hold your tongue, (said the king, shewing himself somewhat offended)—'Tis my pleasure that you love and respect her as much as if she were your mother.—Go therefore and dress yourself—for I intend this day to return back and meet her.'

The princess was very obedient; and went to her chamber to dress: but her nurse, perceiving by her eyes, that something troubled her, ' What is the matter, my dear jewel, (said she) why weeps my child?' ' Oh! my poor nurse, (replied Graciosa) how is it possible I should otherwise than weep, my father is going to bring me home a mother-in-law; and to complete my misery, the only and most cruel enemy I have in the world; in a word, it is the hideous Grognon.' How is it possible to behold her within these curtains, which the queen, my dear mother, so curiously embroidered with her own hands? How is it possible to caress a hideous face that has so impatiently sought my death?' ' My dear child, (replied the nurse) there is a necessity that your demeanor should be as conspicuously good, as your birth is great: princesses, like yourself, ought to give greater example than others: and what more noble example can you give, than that of obedience to your father? Promise me then, that you will not let Grognon see you discontented.' The princess had much ado to resolve; but the discreet nurse gave her so many good reasons for it, that she promised at last to put as good a face upon the matter as she could, and comply with her step-dame's humour.

Presently she dressed herself in a green garment, the ground of which was cloth of gold: her white deshevelled hair flowed in loose ringlets about her shoulders, the sport of the playing and enamoured zephyrs, which was the mode of that time; and she put on her head a light garland of roses and jessamines, the leaves of which were all of emeralds. In this dress, Venus, the mother of Cupid, would not have appeared so fair. Yet her sadness, which she could not overcome, was still visible in her countenance.

But to return to Grognon : that hideous creature too was employed in the decoration of her deformity, she had caused one shce to be made half a cubit higher than the other, to avoid limping as much as possible she could. The valley on one side of her back was filled up with a bolster well stuffed, to make it level with the mountain on the other side: she had supplied one of the empty holes with a glass eye, the best she could meet with; and had painted her cheeks white, and dyed her abominable carrots black ; then she put on a purple robe lined with blue, over which she wore a yellow loose vest tied with violet ribbons. And she would needs make her entry on horseback, because she had heard the queens of Spain were wont so to do.

While the king was giving out his orders, Graciosa, who waited for his going to meet Grognon, went down into the garden, and walking forward into a gloomy grove, seated herself upon a bank of turfs: ‘ Here, ‘ (said she) at length I am at liberty: here I may weep ‘ as long as I will without molestation:’ and with that she fell a sighing and weeping to that degree, that her eyes looked like two fountains of water. In this condition, having forgot all thoughts of returning again to the palace, she spy’d coming towards her a page clad in green fattin, with white plumes in his cap, and the most beautiful countenance in the world; who, when he drew near her, with one knee upon the ground; ‘ Princess, (said he) the king stays for you.’ She was surprised by the attractive features which she observed in the young page; and in regard she knew him not, thought he might be one of Grognon’s train. ‘ How long (said ‘ she) have you been admitted by the king into the ‘ number of his pages?’ ‘ I belong not, madam, to the ‘ king, (said he) I belong to you, and never will belong ‘ to any other.’ ‘ You belong to me! (replied the ‘ princess, full of astonishment) how is that possible, since ‘ I know not who you are!’ ‘ Oh, princess, (said he) ‘ I never durst as yet attempt to make myself known. ‘ But the misfortunes with which you are threatned by ‘ the king’s marriage, obliged me to speak to you sooner

' than otherwise I would have done. I had resolved to leave to time and my own assiduous services, the care of manifesting my love and respect for your highness, and — How! a page (cried the princes) has a page the presumption to tell me he loves me! This compleats the measure of my misfortunes.' ' Fright not youtself, fair Graciosa, (said the page, with a tender and respectful air) I am Parcinet, a prince too well known, both by my birth, riches and learning, for you to find so great an inequality between us, though your merit and beauty do indeed make a distinction. I am often in those places which you frequent, though you see me not. The gift of Faryism, which I received from my birth, has greatly assisted to procure me the pleasure of your company; I will attend you this day, wherever you go, and perhaps it may so fall out, that I may not prove a useless companion.' All the while he was speaking, the princess looked upon him with astonishment from which she could scarce recover herself. At last, said she, ' Are you the charming Percinet, whom I have so great a desire to see, and of whom such wonders are reported? How glad am I that you will be in the number of my friends! Now I no longer fear the mischievous Grognon, since you are so kind to take me under your protection.' Some few words more they had together, and then Graciosa returned to the palace, where she found a horse ready harnessed and caparisoned, which Percinet had put into the stable, and which the groonis believed to be appointed for her. She mounted immediately; for she was very nimble and active, and the page took the horse by the bridle and led him, turning continually towards his mistress, that he might have the pleasure of beholding her.

When the horse that was made choice of to carry Grognon, appeared near Graciosa's Palfiy, you would on the comparison have thought him some draught-horse, taken from a cart, and the furniture of the princess's horse did so glitter with precious stones, that there was no comparison between them: of which the king, whose

but

head was full of a thousand other fancies, took no notice. But the eyes of all the lords and ladies were fixed only upon the princess, whose beauty they admired; and her pretty page in green, who they thought the most genteel that belonged to the court.

They met Grognon upon the road in an open calash, frightfully deformed and misshapen, notwithstanding her arts to conceal it. The king and the princess embraced her, and presented her her horse to get up and ride. But, perceiving Graciosa's Palfry, 'How (said she) shall that pufi have a finer horse than I?—I had rather never be queen, but return to my wealthy castle, than be thus used.' The king commanded the princess immediately to alight, make it her request to Grognon, that she would be pleased to do her the honour to accept of her horse:

The princess obeyed without any reply: but Grognon took no notice of her, nor even thanked her for her civility; but causing herself to be mounted, upon the princess's fine ambler, she looked then if possible, more odious and frightful than before; and all the while eight gentlemen held her for fear of falling. Nevertheless she was not pleased, but muttered a thousand menaces and curses between her gums. They asked her what she would be pleased to have? 'Have! (said she) why, as I am mistress here, I would have the green page to hold my horse, as he did when Graciosa rode upon it.' Immediately the king ordered the green page to lead the queen's horse. Upon which Percinet cast his eyes upon his mistress, and she her's upon him, without speaking so much as one word: however, he obeyed, and all the court moved on, while the trumpets sounded aloud; whereat Grognon was rejoiced, and thought to herself, she would not change her flat nose and skrew mouth for all Graciosa's beauty.

But when they least expected it, the mettled horse began to caper and bounce, and at length fell a running as if it had been for a race. Grognon held fast by the mane and the pommel of the faddie, and bawl'd out a most hideous roar; but at length her courser

trew her, and down she came with one foot in the stirrup, the horse dragging her over the stones, through bushes, and through thick and thin, till she was all over so bemired that it would have been a kindness to have pumped her. But as the whole court rode after her as fast as possible, they soon overtook her, though not till her flesh was torn from her legs and thighs, her head bruised in three or four places, and one arm broken; in short, never was a royal bride in such a miserable condition.

The king seemed to be at his wits end: they picked her up like a glass broken in pieces; for her bonnet lay in one place, her shoes in another; there lay a row of teeth, there lay an eye; they however carried her to the king's palace, put her to bed, and sent for the most eminent surgeons. But notwithstanding her disorder, she continued to scold and rave without ceasing.

' This is one of Graciosa's tricks, (cried she) without doubt she picked out that unruly head-strong jade to do me a mischief, and to have killed me if she could. ' If the king does not do me justice, I'll return to my wealthy castle, and never see him more.' Grognon's wrathful speech was presently reported to the king; whose prevailing passion being interest, the thoughts of losing so many pipes of gold and diamonds made him tremble; so that he was ready for any impression of revenge. He ran to his odious mistress, fell at her feet, and swore, that if she would think of a punishment proportionable to Graciosa's offence, he would give her up to chastisement: to which she answered, she was satisfied, and would send for the wretch immediately.

Accordingly a messenger was sent to tell the princess that Grognon would speak with her. The poor princess immediately turned pale, and shook every joint of her, believing that the message boded her no good, and that it was not to care for and give her sweetmeats that Grognon desired her company: she looked about her every where, to see whether Percinet would, but there were no signs of him; so she went with trembling feet and sad heart, to Grognon's apartment. No sooner was she entered,

but

but the doors were locked upon her, and four women, resembling four furies, fell upon her, tore her costly garments from her back, and stript off her very shift. But when they discovered her naked beauty, the cruel hags being unable to bear the lustre of her dazzling whiteness, shut their eyes, as if they had been gazing a long time upon the snow. ‘ Fall on, fall on, (cried the ‘ merciless Grogson, from her bed) let me have her ‘ flayed, leave not a bit of that white skin, which she ‘ thinks so lovely, upon her flesh.

In any other distress Graciosa could have wished for her dear Percinet; but finding herself quite stript, she was too modest to desire the prince should be a witness to her nakedness, and therefore she prepared herself to suffer like a helpless lamb. The four furies had each of them a terrible rod in their hands, and huge brooms stood by them to make more, as they wore out the first: they laid on without mercy; and at every stroke Grognon cried out, harder, harder yet, you are too merciful.

Nobody would have thought, but that after all this, the princess must have been flayed alive from head to foot: but it fell out otherwise; for the courtly Percinet had bewitched the women’s eyes, so that they thought they had rods in their hands, when they were only light plumes of various coloured feathers; which Graciosa immediately perceived, and ceased to be afraid. ‘ Oh, ‘ Percinet, said she to herself, thou art come gener- ‘ ously to my relief! What should I have done without ‘ thee?’ The furies having at last so tired themselves, that they could no longer stir their arms, they huddled the princess’s cloaths about her, and put her out of the room, with a great deal of injurious language.

The princess returned to her chamber, and feined to be very ill, went to bed, and ordered that nobody should stay in the room but her nurse, to whom she recounted the whole story, and, tired with telling it, fell asleep; which the nurse perceiving, went out of the chamber about business. Soon after, the princess waking, spied in a corner of the chamber, the green page, not daring to come any nearer out of respect. She told him she

would never forget the obligation he had laid upon her; she conjured him not to abandon her to the fury of her implacable enemy; and desired him for the present to retire, because she had often been told, that it was not decent for young virgins to be alone with young men. He replied, ‘ That he hoped she was sensible of the respect he had for her; and that it was but his duty, as she was his mistress, to obey her in all things, though it were at the expence of his own satisfaction.’ He thereupon left her; having first advised her to feign herself ill from the severe treatment she had received.

Grognon’s joy to hear that Graciosa was in such a weak condition, made her mend sooner than could have been expected; after which the nuptials were solemnized with a more than ordinary magnificence. And because the king knew that Grognon, above all things in the world, loved to be praised as a beauty, he caused her picture to be drawn, and proclaimed a tournament, wherein six of the bravest and most accomplished knights of the court were to maintain against all gainsayers, that Grognon was the most beautiful princess in the world. Many knights and strangers came to maintain the contrary. And the ugly queen was present at all the combats, placed in a balcony under a canopy of cloth of gold; where she had the pleasure to see her knights, by their strength and activity, victors, in defence of her bad cause. Graciosa, who was placed behind her, drew the eyes of all the people upon her, while the silly and vain-glorious Grognon thought herself the only object of their admiration.

At last, when none seemed to be left that durst defy the champions of Grognon’s Beauty, on a sudden there arrived a young knight, holding in his hand a box that was all set with diamonds: immediately he caused proclamation to be made, that he would maintain Grognon to be the foulest and most deformed of all the sex, and that she, whose picture he had in his box, was the most beautiful virgin in the world. Having said this, he ran against all the six nights, and threw them to the ground.

After which, six more presenting themselves, one after another

another till they numbered four and twenty, the young knight serving them all alike; and then opening his box, he told the vanquished champions, that to convince them of their error, he should shew them his beautiful picture. Every body immediately knew it to be the princess Graciosa's, but who the young knight was, nobody could tell; who, after he had made a profound bow to his mistress, retired without telling his name: but Graciosa did not doubt he was her beloved Percinet.

The enraged Grognon, being almost choaked with anger, and unable to speak, made signs that it was Graciosa she would be at; and when she could explain herself, she fell a raving like a bedlamite. ‘ How! (said she) dispute with the prize of beauty? What, bring her champion to affront my knights! No, it is not be borne.—I'll be revenged or die.’ ‘ Madam, (replied the princess) I will protest to your majesty, I have no hand in this unlucky accident; and, if you please will sign it with my blood, that you are the most charming beauty in the world, and that I am a monster of deformity.’ ‘ Oh—you are merry, Mrs. Cock-a-hoop, (replied Grognon; but I shall have my turn in a little time.’ Presently it was told the king in what a fury his wife was, and what a deadly fear the princess was in; who besought him to have pity on her; for that if he left her to the queen's indignation, she would shew her no mercy. But the king was not moved; and all his answer was, that as he had given up the princess into the power of her mother-in-law, she might do what she pleased with her.

The wicked Grognon waited with impatience for night; and when it was dark, ordered her flying-coach to be got ready; forced Graciosa into it, and directed her to be carried, under a good guard, a hundred leagues off, into a wide forest, through which nobody durst travel, because it was full of lions, bears, tygers, and wolves. When they were into the midst of this forest, they ordered her to alight, and there left her, regardless of her tears and supplications to take pity on her. ‘ I beg not (said she) my life at your hands; but only that you will vouchsafe

‘ vouchsafe me a speedy death: kill me, and at once
‘ deliver me from the many terrors worse than death
‘ that I am going to suffer.’ But she might as well have
talked to so many statues, for they would not even give
her an answer, and flying from her with an uncom-
passionate speed, left the fair unfortunate virgin all alone.
Forfaken thus, and in the dark, she wandered for some
time, not knowing whether she went, bruising herself
sometimes against the trees, falling sometimes, and
sometimes entangling among the thorns and bushes; till
at length she sat down upon the ground, not having
strength to stand on her feet. Percinet, she cried some-
times to herself. ‘ Oh Percinet! where art thou? Is it
‘ possible that thou shouldst forsake me?’ No sooner had
she uttered these words, but she saw one of the most
agreeable and surprising sights in the world; it was an
illumination so splendid, that there was hardly a tree in the forest on which there did not hang several
branches stuck with tapers; and at the bottom of a walk
she perceived a palace, which seemed to be all of chry-
stal, and shone as bright as the sun. She secretly hoped
Percinet had a hand in this pleasing enchantment;
which hope inspired her with no small joy, though inter-
mixed with fear. ‘ I am alone, (said she to herself)
‘ the prince is young, agreeable, amorous, and I am
‘ obliged to him for my life: Oh — this is too, too much,
‘ I must get out of his way; ’tis better I shou’d die than
‘ yield to his love.’ Having uttered these words, she
arose faint and weary as she was, as without so much
as turning her eyes towards the fair castle, walking
another way, so disturbed by the distraction of her
thoughts, that she knew not what she did.

At this instant, a noise, which she heard behind her, increased her fears, and made her apprehend some wild
beast was coming to devour her; but looking, trembling,
behind her, she perceived Percinet, who seemed more
beautiful than Love himself is painted by the most ex-
quisite pencils. What, (said he) my adorable princess,
‘ do you fly from me! — Are you afraid of him who adores
‘ you? Can it be, that you should have so little know-
ledge

ledge of my respect, as to believe me to be capable of failing in the duty I owe you? Ah, no, cease your fears, and go with me to the palace of Fairy-land; into which, however, I will deny myself the pleasure of entering, if you forbid me. There you will be received by the queen my mother, and my sisters, who already have a most tender affection for you, from the report I have made of your rare endowments.' Graciosa, charmed with the subinissive and obliging manner of her young lover's address, could not refuse to seat herself with him in a little calash, curiously painted and gilded, which two harts drew with such prodigious swiftness, that in a very short time he shewed her a thousand different parts of the forest, which filled her with admiration. Every thing might be distinctly seen. In one place, shepherds and shepherdesses, curiously dressed, and dancing to their flutes and bagpipes. In other places, by the sides of purling streams, she beheld the country swains courting their mistresses, and heightening their mirth by singing a thousand witty songs and roundelayes, 'I thought (said she to Percinet) this forest had been uninhabited; but to me it seems to be well peopled, and that the people live very happily.'—'Since your coming hither, my dear princess, (replied Percinet) this gloomy solitude has been the seat of delights and pleasing amusements: the loves and graces all wait on you; and the flowers, daisies and primroses spring up under your feet.' Graciosa durst make no reply, being unwilling to engage in such kind of compliments, and therefore desired the prince to carry her to the queen his mother.

Immediately he commanded the harts to hasten to the palace of Fairy-land, whither when the princess came, her ears were entertained with the sweetest music; and the queen; with her two daughters, who were all exquisitely beautiful, came forth to meet her, embraced her, and led her into a great room, the walls of which were of the finest crystal. There, with great astonishment, she observed the story of her life engraved to that very day, ending with the tour she had just taken in

the forest with the prince in his calash. ‘ Your historians are very quick, (said Graciosa to Percinet) for I perceive all the variety of my actions, or even gestures, are immediately recorded here.’ ‘ The reason, my dear princess, (replied Percinet) is, because I would not lose the most minute idea of your perfections, but imprint them deeply in my heart; yet, alas! I am neither happy nor contented any where.’ She answered him not a word, but thanked the queen for her kind reception. Soon after a noble banquet was served up, and Graciosa eat with good appetite: being overjoyed to meet with Percinet in the forest, where she had been afraid she should have found nothing but bears and lions. And now, though she was sufficiently tired, he engaged her to go into a large room that glittered with gold and diamonds, and contained the most exquisite paintings, where she was entertained with an opera, describing the loves of Cupid and Psyche, intermixt with dances and songs, among which a young shepherd sung the following:

You are belov'd fair Graciosa, more
 Than ere the God of Love himself could love,
 When he is Psyche did adore.
 Be not more rig'rous than bears or wolves,
 Whose natural rage dissolves,
 When liking and affection move.
 They to love's laws submit and tamely pay
 Their homage to the little archer's bow.
 Why should not you
 As tender be, and kinder far than they?

She blush'd to hear herself thus named before the queen and the princesses; and whispered Percinet, that she was ashamed to find all the world were privy to their secrets; which, continued she, puts me in mind of some pretty lines, which may be aptly applied on this occasion.

Keep your secrets in your brest :
 Silence is a charming guest,
 I entertain with full content :
 For the worlds as strange conceits,
 And, as crimes, too often treats
 The pleasures of the innocent.

Percinet begged her pardon for having done a thing that displeased her. And now, the opera being at an end, the queen ordered the two princesses to conduct Graciosa to her apartment. Nothing was ever more magnificent than the chamber and furniture, nor so rich as the bed where she was to lie. She was attended by four and twenty virgins dressed like nymphs, the eldest of which was about eighteen, and every one seemed to be a miracle of beauty. When she was in bed, a most heavenly symphony of music filled the room, to lull her to sleep; but her spirits were so agitated and disordered by these surprising things, that it was not in her power to close her eyes. ‘ All that I have seen (said she) must certainly be Enchantments. Good heavens! that a prince so agreeable and witty should be so formidable! I cannot make too much haste from these enchanting places.’ Yet when she considered the agreeable difference between living in so magnificent a palace, and exposing herself to the cruelty of the barbarous Grognon, she could not think of the separation without regret. This consideration pleaded for her stay: but, on the other side, she found Percinet so obliging, that she resolved not to continue any longer in a palace of which he was the master.

In the morning, as soon as she was up, she was presented with garments of all sorts and colours, and the richest jewels, laces, gloves, and silk stockings; all extremely fine, and admirable for the curiosity of their workmanship. Graciosa’s dress was never before so splendid, nor did she ever more gracefully become it, nor appear so charming. When she was dressed, Percinet entered her chamber, habited in green and gold, for green was his colour, because Graciosa loved it. Whatever is admirable in shape, beauty of features, and majesticks of mien, was all exquisitely perfect in Percinet. Graciosa told him she had not slept a wink all night; having been kept awake by the thoughts of her misfortunes; and that she could not but be apprehensive of the consequences. ‘ What are your fears, madam? (replied Percinet) You are absolute sovereign

'reign here, and are adored; will you then forsake
me and return to your most cruel enemy?' 'Were I
the mistress of my own destiny, (answered the princess)
I would willingly accept the choice you propose; but
I am accountable for my actions to the king my father;
and it is better, therefore, for me to suffer, than be
wanting in my duty.' Percinet omitting nothing that
he could think of to persuade her to marry him; but she
would by no means give her consent; and it was almost
against her will that he detained her eight days; during
which time he entertained her with a thousand new plea-
sures and diversions.

While she stayed, she several times expressed an earnest desire to know what passed in Grognon's court; and what plausible stories she contrived to conceal the cruelty of her intentions. Percinet told her he would send his squire, who was both witty and discreet. The princess replied, 'She was persuaded he needed nobody to inform him, but might tell her himself.' 'Come then (said he) with me to the great tower, and you shall there directly see with your own eyes what you desire to know.' With that he led her to a tower that was prodigiously high, and all of crystal of the rock, like the rest of the castle. He bid her set her foot in a particular place, and put her little finger in his mouth, and then look towards the city. Which she had no sooner done, but she perceived the wicked Grognon sitting with the king, and heard her talking with him after this manner: 'This poor wretch, the princess, with all her beauty, has hanged herself in the cellar: I have been to see her, and I profess the very sight of her frightened me: All that is now to be done is to bury her, and then I make no question but your majesty will soon forget so inconsiderable a loss.' But the king wept, and bewailed the death of his daughter, while Grognon deriding his sorrows, retired to her chamber; where, by her command, a large billet was presently dressed up in funeral pomp, and laid in a coffin, and the king immediately ordered a solemn interment. Infinite was the train of mourners that attended the hearse, weeping and wailing

wailing, and bitterly cursing the step-dame, whom they secretly accused as the cause of the princess's death. Every body went into deep mourning; and the princess could hear them lamenting to themselves, What pity it was, so sweet and young a princess should perish through the cruelty of the wicked Grognon! It were a good deed, they cried, to cut her to pieces, and cast her to the fowls of the air. The king also would neither eat nor drink, but grieved continually.

Graciosa seeing her father so extremely afflicted,
 ‘ Ah, Percinet (said she) ‘tis impossible for me longer
 ‘ to bear that my father should think me dead; there-
 fore, if you love me, carry me back again, that I may
 ‘ shew myself at court.’ Notwithstanding all his argu-
 ments, he could not prevail upon her to relinquish this
 request. ‘ Dear princess (said he) you will wish your-
 ‘ self again, more than once in the palace of Fairy-land;
 ‘ though I dare not presume you will ever wish for me,
 ‘ to whom you are more cruel even than Grognon is
 ‘ to you.’ But whatever he could say, Graciosa insisted
 upon going: so taking leave of the princess, mother and
 sisters, Percinet and she got into the calash, and the harts
 ran with the swiftness of arrows. When they were out
 of the precincts of the palace, Graciosa heard a great
 noise; and looking behind her, beheld the whole edifice
 tumbled down, and shattered into a thousand pieces.
 ‘ What miracle is this, (said she) the palace quite
 ‘ demolished! – Yes, madam, (replied Percinet) I must
 ‘ have my palace among the dead, nor will you ever
 ‘ enter it again till your death.’ ‘ Why are you angry?
 ‘ (replied Graciosa, endeavouring to pacify him) all
 ‘ things considered, have I not more reason to com-
 ‘ plain than you?’

When they arrived at the court, Percinet so ordered it, that himself, the princess, and the calash, became invisible; so that she went unseen till she come into the king's chamber, and threw herself at his feet. When the king saw her, he started up in fear, and was running away, taking her for a ghost; but she held him by his garment, and convinced him she was not dead; but that
 Grognon

Grognon had caused her to be carried into a wild forest, where she had got into a tree, and lived upon the fruit. She added, that the queen had caused a billet to be buried instead of her; and besought him to send her to one of his remote castles, where she might not be exposed to the rage of her mother-in-law.

The king, doubted whether she spoke truth, sent to have the billet taken up, and being convinced of the imposture, was amazed at Grognon's wickedness, not imagining such malice could have been in a woman's breast. Any other king would have laid her in the billet's place: but he was a poor weak man, who had no courage to be angry in earnest: however, he caressed his daughter more than ever, and made her sup with him. But when Grognon's creatures acquainted her with the princess's return, and that she had supped with the king, her rage became perfect frenzy. She flew to the king's chamber, and told him, he must either deliver up his daughter to her that moment, or she would instantly be gone and never see him more; that he was a fool to believe she was Graciosa, though indeed she somewhat resembled her, for that Graciosa had certainly hanged herself; and that if he gave credit to the imposture of others, he had not the confidence and value which he ought to have for her. The king, not daring to resist, delivered up the unfortunate princess into her hands, believing, or feigning to believe, she was not his daughter.

Grognon, transported with joy, dragged the princess, by the help of her women, into a dark dungeon, where she caused her to be stripped, covered her with coarse dirty rags, and a nasty cap upon her head, hardly allowed her straw to lie upon, or bread to eat.

In this distress she wept bitterly, and wished herself again in the castle of Fairy-land; but she durst not call upon Percinet, conscious that she had not been so kind to him as she ought to have been; and consequently not daring to premise herself, that he had still so much love for her, as to come again to her succour. In the mean time the wicked Grognon had sent for a Fairy more malicious

malicious than herself; who being come, ‘ I have got
 ‘ (said she) a little saucy minx that vexes me to death?
 ‘ I would willingly punish her, by setting her some diffi-
 ‘ cult tasks, which she not being able to accomplish, I
 ‘ may have a pretence to break her bones and the no
 ‘ excuse: assist me, therefore, to find out some new
 ‘ punishment for her every day.’ The Fairy answered,
 she would consider of it, and return the next day. She
 was as good as her word, and brought with her a skein
 of thread, as wide about as the waist of three people;
 so fine that it would hardly bear breathing upon; and
 so tangled, that neither beginning or end were to be
 found. Grognon was overjoyed at the impossibility of
 this task; sent immediately for the lovely captive, and,
 with a smile of derision, ‘ Here, (said she) prepare
 ‘ your clumsy paws to unravel this skein; and be
 ‘ assured, if thou breakest the least bit, thou shalt dearly
 ‘ pay for it; for I will flay thee alive myself: begin
 ‘ when thou wilt, but I must have it unravelled before
 ‘ sun-set;’ and, saying this, she shut her up in a chamber
 under three locks.

When the princess was alone, she attempted the task,
 turning the skein a thousand ways, and broke it a thou-
 sand times; which so distracted her, that she gave over
 the attempt; and throwing it in the middle of the room,
 ‘ Go, fatal skein, (said she) lie there, since thou it is
 ‘ that art to be the occasion of my death. Oh, Percinet!
 ‘ Percinet! if my severity has not given too great a
 ‘ repulse to your affection, though I cannot hope your
 ‘ assistance, yet come, however, and receive my last
 ‘ farewell.’ Saying this, she fell a weeping so bitterly,
 that any thing less sensible than a lover would have been
 moved to compassion. Percinet immediately opened
 the door with the same ease as if he had the keys in his
 pocket. ‘ Here I am, dear princess, (said he) always
 ‘ ready at your service; it is not in my power to for-
 ‘ sake you, though you refuse to return my love.’
 Having said this, he struck three times with his wand
 upon the skein; and immediately the threads untwisted,
 and closed one to the other; and with two more strokes,

the whole was unravelled with surprising ease: which done, he asked her, whether she had any other service to command him, and whether she intended never to bear his company, but in her distresses? ‘ Upbraid me not, ‘ sweet Percinet (cried she) I am already too unfortunate.—Oh, princess, (replied Percinet) it is your own fault that you are not absolutely delivered from this insulting tyranny, to which you are a victim. ‘ Go with me, make your felicity mine, and mine yours; ‘ what are you afraid of! That you love me not with a sincere and lasting affection: (replied the princess) ‘ I am desirous that time should confirm the truth of the sentiments you express for me.’ Percinet being offended at her jealousy, took his leave and left her.

The sun was just setting, when Grognon, who waited for the close of the evening with the greatest impatience, came with her four furies, who attended her wherever she went. She put her three keys into the three locks, and as she opened the door, ‘ Well! (said she) I suppose my beautiful idler has been afraid to make use of her ten fingers.—Ay, ay, she had rather sleep to preserve her complexion.’ However, when she was entered, Graciosa presented to her the skain, wherein there was not a thread amiss; so that all Grognon could say was, that she had fulfilled it, and was an awkward creature! for which she gave her two such unmerciful blows on her fair cheeks, which were of the colour of the lily and the rose, that they became black and blue. The unfortunate Graciosa, who was forced to suffer patiently what she could not avoid, was after this locked close up again in her dungeon.

Grognon amazed that she had succeeded no better with her skain of thread, sent for the Fairy again; and reproached her in very passionate terms; ‘ Find me out something else, (said she) so difficult as may amount to an impossibility.’ The Fairy went away, and the next day returned with a great tub full of feathers of all sorts of birds; as nightingales, canary birds, robin-redbreasts, goldfinches, linnets, parrots, owls, sparrows, pigeons, ostriches, bustards, peacocks, larks,

partridges, and an infinite number more, which I am unable to name; and these feathers were so intermixed, that the birds themselves would never have been able to have known their own apparel. ‘Here (said the ‘fairy to Grognon) is that will try the wit and patience of your captive: command her to separate these feathers, and lay the plumage of every one of these birds by itself! which is a task would puzzle her, where she a Fairy herself.’ Grognon was in an ecstasy of joy only at the bare thoughts of the princess’s perplexity. She sent for her; and after having terrified her with a thousand menaces, she shut her up with the feathers in a chamber under three locks, as before; giving her to understand, that she expected her work should be done before sun-set.

Graciosa took some of the feathers, and looked upon them; but finding it impossible to know the difference of one bird’s feathers from those of another, she threw them back into the tub. Yet she made several essays: but the oftener she try’d, the more impossible she found her task. So that, at length overwhelmed with grief and despair, ‘I must die, (said she, with a lamentable voice) ‘it is my death that is sought for, and only that can put an end to my miseries. Injured Percinet, has left me too no doubt; and to call upon him for succour, would be in vain; for, had his love continued, he would have been here ere now.’

‘Dear Graciosa, I am here, cried Percinet, starting up from under the feathers, where he lay hid) I am ready to deliver you from all your troubles: and now, after so many proofs of my fidelity, can you any longer suspect the sincerity of my affection, or think I do not love you better than my life?’ Saying this, he struck three times with his wand upon the cask, and immediately the feathers flew out, and sorted themselves into little heaps about the room. ‘I am infinitely obliged to you, Sir, (said Graciosa) but for you, I must have been lost: and be assured I will not be ungrateful.’ The prince used his utmost endeavours to persuade her to come to an immediate resolution

tion in his favour: but still she insisted upon time, he complied, though it was much against his will.

Grognon came exactly at her hour; but was quite amazed and confounded to see her designs again defeated: she, however, bestowed some blows upon Graciosa, pretending the feathers were not laid even. She sent for the Fairy directly, and fell into such a rage against her, that she knew not what to say, being herself quite confounded. At length the Fairy promised to use her utmost art, in making a box, which if her curiosity ever tempted her to open, should puzzle her to shut again, beyond all the arts in Fairy land to help her: Accordingly some days after, she brought this box, which was somewhat large. ‘Here, (said she to Grognon) send your captive somewhere with this box; but forbid her to open it, and then she certainly will; and you will have your desire.’ Grognon, observing the Fairy’s directions, ‘Here, (said she, to her fair captive) carry this box to my rich castle, and set it upon a table in my cabinet; but, upon pain of death, I command you not to look what is in it.’

Graciosa, having put on her wooden clogs, her canvas gown, and her woolen cap, set out on her journey. All that met her cried, certainly there goes some goddess in disguise; for the poverty of her dress could not conceal her wonderful beauty. However, she began to be tired with her journey; and coming into a little wood, surrounded with delightful meadows, she sat down to rest herself: but having set the box on her knees, her curiosity on a sudden prompted her to open it. ‘What can be the danger; said she to herself) I shall take nothing out of it, and would only see what is in it;’ so, reflecting no farther on the consequences, she opened the box; when immediately out came a great many little men and women, violins, instruments, little pictures, little cooks, and little dishes; in short, the giant of the whole company was not higher than your little finger: they danced in the meadows; divided themselves into companies, and began the pleasantest ball that ever was seen; some skipped and capered about; others acted as cooks;

cooks; some eat and drank; and the little violins played to a miracle. Graciosa, for some time, was delighted with the sight, thinking to recall the merry wantons into the box; but not one of them would return: the little gentlemen and ladies betook themselves to their heels; the violins ran away; the cooks, with their pots upon their heads, and their spits upon their shoulders, flew from her like so many birds; and when she followed them into the wood, they got into the meadows; when she ran after them in the meadows, they flew into the wood. ‘ Oh, indiscreet curiosity! (cried Graciosa, weeping) Now my enemies will prevail: the only misfortune I could have prevented, is befallen me through my own folly; no, I cannot sufficiently blame myself. Oh! Percinet! Percinet! if it be possible for thee still to love a princess so imprudent, assist me once more, in this most perilous accident that ever threatened my life.

Percinet did not stay to be called thrice, but appeared immediately in his green habit; saying, were it not for the wicked Grognon, he supposed Graciosa would never think of him. ‘ Have a better opinion of my sentiments (replied the princess) I am neither insensible of merit, nor ungrateful for kindnesses received. It is true, I have put your constancy to trials; but it is to crown it when I am convinced of it.’ Percinet being now better pleased than ever, gave three strokes with his wand upon the box, and immediately the little gentlemen and ladies, the violins, the cooks, with their roast meat, in short, the whole of this diminutive company placed themselves again in the box, as if they had never been out of it. Which done, Percinet, who had left his chariot in the wood, desired the princess to use it the remaining part of her journey to the castle; and indeed she had no small need of such a convenience, considering the condition she was in. So, having rendered her invisible, he conducted her himself, and by that means had the pleasure of her company; a pleasure to which, my chronicle says, she was not indifferent in her heart, though she was careful to conceal her sentiments.

Thus she arrived at the rich castle: but when she demanded the key of the cabinet in Grognon's name, the governor burst out a laughing.—‘ How! (said he) hast thou the confidence to think that shepherds girls are ever admitted into queens cabinets! Go, go, get thee gone, wooden clogs and hobnails never yet defiled these glittering floors.’ Graciosa desired him to write a line why he had refused her entrance, which he readily did. So leaving the castle, she was received by the amiable Percinet, who waited for her, and conducted her back to the king's palace. It would be difficult to relate all the tender and respectful arguments he used by the way, to persuade her to put an end to her misfortunes. To which she replied, that if Grognon imposed upon her any more of these impossible commands, she would yield him her consent.

When the enraged step-dame saw the princess returned, she flew upon the fairy, whom she had detained with her all the while, fastened her claws in her wrinkled cheeks, and would have throttled her too, had it been possible to strangle a Fairy. Graciosa presented her the governor's letter and the box; but she threw both in the fire, not vouchsafing to open them; and had she thought of it, would have thrown the princess after them; but she did not deser her punishment.

She caused a great hole to be made in the garden, as deep as a well, and a great stone to be laid over the mouth of it. Then taking occasion to walk in the garden, she said to Graciosa, and the rest that attended her, ‘ Under that stone, as I am informed, there lies concealed immense treasure, let us go and remove it.’ Upon this, they all set their hands to it, and Graciosa among the rest; which was what Grognon desired; for as the princess stood by the side of the hole, Grognon pushed her in, and then rolled the stone over it again.

This stroke appeared past remedy; for how could Percinet find her thus buried in the earth? She herself despaired, and repented she had so long delayed to marry him. ‘ How terrible is my destiny: (said she) this kind of death is more dreadful than any other.

Oh,

' Oh, Percinet! you are sufficiently revenged for my scrupulous reluctance. But I was afraid you were like many other men, who prove inconstant when once they find themselves beloved; I was desirous to be certain of your heart, but my unjust suspicions are now the cause of my present misery. Yet, (continued she) if I could but hope you would shew some regret for the loss of me, I should be less sensible of my misfortune.' She was lamenting in this manner to ease her sorrows, when she perceived a little door open, which she had not seen before, by reason of the obscurity. At the same time she also saw day-light, and a garden full of flowers, fruits, fountains, grottos, statutes, groves, and arbours; she went in, and walked forward into a spacious alley, wondering what would be the event of this extraordinary beginning. Soon after she discovered the castle of Fairy-Land, which she easily knew again; for a castle made all of crystal of the rock, with the history of one's life engraved therein, is no very common sight. Percinet appeared too, together with the queen his mother, and his sisters. ' Fair princess (said the queen to Graciosa) it is time now you should consent; make my son most happy, and free yourself from that deplorable condition wherein you live under the tyranny of Grognon.'

The grateful princess fell upon her knees, and told the queen she might dispose of her destiny, and that she would obey her in all things; that now she discovered the truth of Percinet's prediction, when he foretold her, that his palace should be among the dead, and she never enter it again, till she had been buried; that she was amazed at his knowledge, that his merit was no less her admiration, and therefore she accepted him for her husband. Now the prince, in his turn, threw himself at her feet; the whole palace resounded with music and acclamations of joy; and the nuptials were solemnized with the greatest magnificence. All the fairies for a thousand miles round came thither in most sumptuous equipages; some in chariots drawn by swans, others by dragons; some rode upon the clouds, and others in

globes of fire. Among the latter appeared the Fairy who assisted Grognon to torment Graciosa. When she knew who it was, she was in the greatest surprise; besought her to forget what was past, and said she would endeavour to make her amends for the evils she had caused her to suffer. And it is certain, she did not stay out the festival, but remounted her chariot drawn by two terrible serpents, she flew to the king's palace; and finding Grognon out, wrung off her neck, notwithstanding what all the guards and her women could do to prevent it.

The M O R A L

Detested envy thus with baneful wing,
Disturbs the calm of our serenest days;
She ne'er with-holds her poison'd sting,
But wounds insidious, and our peace betrays.

'Twas she who Grognon's malice mov'd
To ruin Graciosa's innocence;
'Twas she who all these snares improv'd
Her wit to baffle, and confound her sense.

'Twas she who aim'd the cruel darts,
Fair Graciosa's peace undoing;
But Percinet their influence thwarts,
And saves the fair from ruin.

Well did he then deserve the heart,
Which afterwards she gave his love;
And who with firmness bear the smart,
To perfect joy their pains improve.

T H E
C U R I O U S S T O R Y .

O F
F I N E T T A.

SOME time ago there lived a king and queen who had managed their affairs so ill, that they were driven out of their dominions; and to support themselves, were forced to sell their crowns, then their robes, linen, and laces, and afterwards all they had; and when they were reduced to the utmost poverty, the king said to the queen, ‘ We are forced out of our kingdoms, and have nothing left, therefore we must think of getting a livelihood both for ourselves and children; think a little what we should do; for my part I am entirely at a loss.’ The queen who was a woman of good sense and wit, asked eight days time to consider of it; and when they were expired, said to him, ‘ Come, don’t let us vex and torment ourselves; you shall lay nets and snares for fowls and lines for fish, while I make them: As for our daughters, they are three proud idle flirts, and fancy themselves still to be great ladies, we will carry them a great way off, that it will be impossible for them to find their way back again; for we can never keep them as fine as they expect we should.’

The king, who was a kind father, began to weep when he saw he must part with his children; but the queen being of an imperious haughty temper, and he being forced to acquiesce with her, he told her she might rise

early the next morning and carry her daughters were she thought fit. While they were thus contriving this affair, the princess Finetta, who was the youngest of the three, heard them through the key-hole; and as soon as she was informed of their design, ran as fast as she was able to a large grotto, inhabited by the Fairy Merlucha, her god-mother; but before she went, took two pounds of fresh butter, eggs, milk and flower, to make a cake of, that she might be the more acceptable guest. When she first set out, she went very cheerfully; but after she had walked some time, and the soles of her shoes were worn away, and her feet began to be galled with the pebbles, she was so weary, that she sat herself down on the grafts, and fell a-crying when a fine Spanish horse passed by ready bridled and saddled, with diamonds enough on his housings to buy two or three towns; who when he saw the princess, he fed by her, bending his knees, seeming to pay some respect to her; whereupon taking him by the bridle, she said, ‘ Pretty horse, if you would carry me to my god-mother the Fairy, I shall be very much obliged to thee; for I am so weary, that I am ready to die away; I promise you I’ll give you good corn and hay, and litter you down with clean straw.’ The horse bent down before her, and she jumped upon his back, he carried her to the Fairy’s grotto as swift as a bird flies in the air; for Merlucha knowing of her god-daughter’s coming, had sent him for that purpose.

When she went in, she made three low courtesies, kissed the hem of her garment, and then said to her, ‘ Good morrow god-mother, how do you do? I have brought you here some milk, butter, flower and eggs, to make a cake after our country fashion.’ ‘ You are welcome, Finetta, (said the fairy) come and let me embrace you.’ Whereupon she kissed her two or three times, which made Finetta ready to die with joy; for Merlucha was a great and renowned fairy. ‘ Well my girl, (said she) you shall be my waiting woman, come dress and comb my head; (which the princess did with all the address imaginable.) I know what brought you hither, (said Merlucha) you heard the king and queen

' queen consulting how they might lose you, and you have no mind to be so served. Take this clue of thread, it will not break, and fasten one end of it to the door of your house, and keep the other in your hand ; when the queen leaves you, it will be an easy matter for you, by this thread, to find your way back again.'

The princess thanked her god mother, who gave her a sack full of cloaths, all covered over with gold and silver, and embracing her, set her upon the same horse again, who carried her home in a moment or two ; and when she had thanked her pretty horse for his trouble, and had bid him return, she went softly into the house, and hiding her sack under the bed, laid herself down without taking any notice of what had passed. As soon as it was day, the king awakened his wife, and bid her prepare for her journey : upon which she got up, and put on a strong pair of shoes, a short petticoat, and white waistcoat, and taking her stick in her hand, went to call her daughters ; the eldest of whom was named Love's Flower, the second Fair-Night, and the youngest Auricular, or Fine-Ear, but, by way of nick name Finetta. ' I have dreamed to-night, (said the queen) that we must go and see my sister, where we shall be treated, and be very merry.' ' Well good madam, where you please (said Love's Flower) who could not endure to live in a desert, so that we go but, 'tis no matter where.' The other two said the same, and taking their leave of their father, they all four set forward for their journey ; they went at last so far that Fine-Ear began to fear lest her clue should not hold out ; for they had gone a great many score miles : however, she was always behind, fastening her thread in the briars. When the queen thought she had carried them so far that they could not find the way back again, she went into a large wood, and said to them, ' Come my little lambs, lie down and take a nap, while I, like a shepherdess, will watch you, lest the wolf should surprise you.' Whereupon they laid themselves down and fell asleep, and the queen, when she thought them fast, took her leave as she thought,

for the last time, when Finetta, who only shut her eyes, and pretended sleep, said to herself, ‘ Was I now of a ‘ revengeful temper, I should leave my sisters to perish ‘ here; for they have beat and abused me very much; ‘ but, however, I will not forsake them.’—Whereupon waking them, she told them the whole story; at which they fell a-crying, and begged of her to take them along with her, promising to give her all the fine things they had. ‘ I know, (said Finetta) you will not perform ‘ what you promise; but nevertheless I shall act the ‘ part of a kind sister.’ And thereupon she rose up, and followed the thread, which brought them home almost as soon as the queen.

When they came there, stopping a moment at the door, they heard the king say, ‘ My heart aches to see ‘ you alone.’ ‘ Indeed (said the queen) we were very ‘ much troubled with our daughters’ ‘ Well, (said ‘ the king) had you brought my Finetta back, I should ‘ not be so much concerned for the other two.’ And just then they knocked at the door: ‘ Who’s there?’ ‘ (said the king) ‘ Your three daughters, Love’s Flower, ‘ Fair Night, and Fine-Ear, (replied they.) And at that the queen trembled, and said, ‘ Don’t open the ‘ door, for they are certainly their spirits; for ’tis impossible they should be returned.’ The king, who was a great a coward as his wife, said, ‘ ‘Tis false, you are ‘ not my daughters.’ Whereupon Finetta replied, ‘ Look through the key-hole, papa, and if I am not your ‘ daughter, Finetta, I consent to be whipped.’ At that the king did as she bid him, and knowing them opened the door. The queen seemed to be very glad to see them, pretending she came back for something she had forgot, and designed to have gone back to them again.

Finetta, when all was over, asked her sisters for what they had promised her; who, thereupon beat her with their distaffs, and told her, That it was for her sake that the king was not sorry for them. Afterwards she went to bed; but being not able to sleep for the blows and bruises they had given her, she heard the queen say, she would carry them another way farther off, from whence

she

she was assured they would never return. Upon this she got up softly, went into the hen-house, and wrung off the necks of two pullets and a cockerel, which the queen had set up to regale herself with; and putting them into a basket, set out to go and see her god-mother again. She had not gone half a mile, being in the dark, and frightened out of her wits, before she heard the Spanish horse whinnying and prancing; who no sooner came to her, but she mounted, and was carried presently to her god-mother's. After the usual compliments, she presented her with the fowls, and desired her good advice; for that the queen had sworn to carry them to the world's end. Merlucha bid her not grieve herself, and gave her a sack full of ashes to carry before her, to sprinkle before her as she went along, telling her when she returned, she needed but observe her foot-steps, which would conduct her back again; and withal, charged her not to take her sisters along with her, assuring her, if she did, she never would see her mote. The horse being ready, Finetta took her leave, and with it a great quantity of diamonds in a box, which she put in her pocket. A little before day, the queen called the princesses again, and told them that the king was not very well, and that she dreamed they must go all four to gather some herbs for him in a certain country, were they were excellent. Love's Flower and Fair-Night, who suspected that their mother's main end in this affair was to lose them, were very much afflicted; but were, notwithstanding, obliged to go, Finetta said not a word all the time, but kept behind them strewing her ashes! and the queen being persuaded that they would never be able to find the way back, for she had carried them a great distance off, and observing them all asleep one evening, took that opportunity to bid them good-bye. When it was day, that Finetta perceived her mother was gone, she awakened her sisters, and told them the queen was gone again, and had left them to themselves. Love's Flower and Fair-Night cried, and tore their hair, and beat their breasts; when Finetta, who was a good-natured girl, pitied them, and told them, though her

god-mother, when she informed her how she shculd find the way back, charged her not to take them along with her, and said she would never see her more if she did. ‘ Yet, (said she) I will venture this to preserve my sisters.’ Whereupon they both fell upon her neck, and kissed her, and all three returned together.

The king and queen were very much surprised to see the princesses again, and talked about it all the night; when Fine-Ear, who had not her name for nothing, heard them lay a new plot, which the queen was to put in execution in the morning, and there upon ran and awakened her sisters, and acquainted them with it. ‘ Alas! (said she) we are all lost, the queen without dis-
‘ pute will carry us and leave us in some desert; for
‘ your sakes I have disoblighed my god-mother, and dare
‘ not go to her as I used to do.’ This news put them to their wits end, and made them say to one another, What shall we do? ‘ Oh! (said Fair-Night) do not let us
‘ trouble ourselves, there are others who have as much
‘ contrivance as the old Melucha; we need but take
‘ some pease along with us, and sow them, and we shall
‘ easily trace our way back again.’ Upon Love’s-Flower approving this expedient, they put pease in their pockets; but for Fine-Ear, instead of pease, she took her sack of fine cloths, and her box of jewels; and they were all three ready against the queen called. ‘ I have
‘ dreamed to-night (said she) that there are three prin-
‘ ces in a country I need not name, waiting to marry
‘ you, and I have a great mind to carry you to see whe-
‘ ther my dream is true or not.’ The queen went first, and the princesses followed after, sowing their pease as they went along, never disturbing themselves, but being satisfied that they, by that means, would find their way home; when one dark night the queen left them again, and went home to the king both weary of so long a journey, and glad to have got rid of so great a charge.

The three princesses slept till eleven o’clock the next day, when Finetta discovered first the queen’s absence; and though she was well provided, could not forbear crying; but, however, relied more on the Fairy Melucha, than

the ability of her sisters. ‘ The queen is gone (said she to her sisters) let us follow her as fast as we can.’ ‘ Hold your tongue, you fool (replied Love’s-Flower) ‘ we can find the way when we please.’ Finetta durst return no answer; but when they wanted to go home, they could find no traces or appearance of any pease; for the pigeons, with which that country abounded, had eaten them up, which set them all in tears. After they had been two days without eating, Love’s-Flower asked her sisters, if they had nothing to eat? Whereupon Finetta said, she had found an acorn; which they would have had from her; but she answered, ‘ What signifies one acorn among three of us? Let us set it, ‘ it may grow to a large tree, and be serviceable.’ To which they all consented, though there was no likelihood of any tree in that country, where there was nothing to be seen but cabbages and lettuces, which the princesses lived on; for had they been nice, they must have perished. They had no other covering, when they slept, than the azure skies, and watering their acorn every night and morning, which they persieved grew apace. When it was got to some size, Love’s-Flower was for climbing it, but it was too weak to bear her; as was likewise Fair-Night, but she was too heavy: whereupon Finetta tried, and when she was up, her sisters asked her what she saw? she told them nothing. ‘ Alas! (said Love’s-Flower,) this oak is not yet tall enough.’ However, they kept watering of it, and Finetta never failed to get up into it twice a-day, and one day when she was up, Fair-Night said to Love’s-Flour, ‘ I have found a sack which our sister has hid from us, what can there be in it?’ ‘ Oh, (said Love’s Flower) she told me she had some old laces.’ ‘ But I believe she had something better,’ replied Fair-Night. And being curious, opened it, and found some old laces of the king and queen’s, which served only to cover the fine clothes and jewels. ‘ What a fly slut this is, said she, let us take them away, and put some pebbles in their place.’ Which the other agreeing to, Finetta came down again, without ever discovering the trick her sisters had played

her; for she had no occasion to dress in a desert, all her thoughts being employed on her oak.

One morning when she was up in it, and her sisters asked her as usual, what she discovered, she told them she saw a house so beautiful, that she could not describe it, that the walls were of emeralds and rubies, and the roof of diamonds set in gold. ‘ You tell fibs, (said they) ‘ it cannot be so.’ ‘ Indeed it is, (answered Finetta,) ‘ come and see yourselves; my eyes are dazzled with ‘ the splendor.’ Whereupon Love’s-Flower climed up, and when she saw the castle, was amazed; and for Fair-Night, whose curiosity did not fail to prompt her to get up in her turn, she seemed as much overjoyed as her sisters. ‘ We must, without dispute (said they) go to ‘ this palace; who knows but we may meet with fine ‘ princes that will think themselves happy to marry us?’ In this manner of discourse they passed away the whole night, when Love’s Flower perceiving Finetta asleep, said to Fair-Night, ‘ Let us dress ourselves in the clothes ‘ Finetta has brought along with her.’ ‘ The thought’s ‘ very good,’ replied Fair-Night. Whereupon they got up and dressed themselves, and made themselves as fine as gold and silver, and jewels could do.

Finetta, who knew not what her sisters had done, opened her sack with a design to dress herself, but how great was her surprise and affliction, when she found nothing but flints and stones? And perceiving at that very juncture her two sisters as bright as the sun in her clothes, she cried and complained of their treachery; who only laughed at her. ‘ How can you (said she to them) carry me along with you to the castle, without letting me be dressed as well as yourselves.’—‘ We have but clothes enough for ourselves, (replied Love’s-Flower) and if thou importunest us thus, thou shalt feel our blows. ‘ But (continued the other) they are my own, my god-mother gave them to me, and you have nothing to do with them.’ ‘ If you tease us any longer (said they) we will kill you, and bury you, and nobody shall know what is become of you.’ Which struck such awe upon poor Finetta, that she durst not provoke

provoke them, but followed them like their servant-maid, at a distance. The nearer they came to the house, the more wonderful it appeared. ‘ I cannot but think,’ (said they one to another) how we shall be diverted and entertained; we shall eat at the king’s table; but for Finetta, she shall wash the dishes in the kitchen; and if we are asked who she is, let us not make the least mention of her as our sister, but say she is a poor herdsman’s daughter,—which cast Finetta into despair, she being a girl endowed with wit and beauty. When they arrived at the gates of the castle, they knocked very hard, and were let in by a frightful old woman: She was fifteen feet high, and thirty about, had but one eye, and that placed in the midst of her forehead, like a Cyclops, and as large as five others; her nose was flat, her skin black, and her mouth so large that it was very frightful. ‘ Oh! unfortunate creatures, (said she) what brought you hither? Do you know that this is a giant’s castle, who would eat you all up for his breakfast? But it is well he is not at home; I am better than he: I will eat but one of you at a time, and you will have the comfort of living two or three days longer.’ When they heard the giants speak thus, they ran away as fast as they could, thinking to save themselves; but she strid as far at one step as they at five, and soon caught them again; and taking one by the hair of the head, and the others by the arms and necks, threw them all together into a cave, where there were nought but toads, snakes, and the bones of devoured persons. And as she was then for eating Finetta, and was only gone for some oil and vinegar, the giant came: but thinking to keep them for herself, as a nice bit, she put them under a great tub, where they had no light but through a little hole.

The giant who was six times as big as his wife, when he spoke made the house shake again, and when he coughed, it seemed like thunder: he had but one large eye, and his hair was like bristles; he leaned on a piece of timber, which he used for a cane, and held a basket in his hand, out of which he took fifteen little children he had

had taken away from their parents, and swallowed them like poached eggs. When the three princesses beheld this, they shuddered, but durst not cry, for fear they should be heard, the giant said to his wife, ‘ I smell fresh flesh: give it me.’ ‘ You always fancy, (said she) that you smell fresh meat, ’tis nothing but some sheep that are going by.’ ‘ Oh! (said the giant) I am not to be deceived thus; I am sure I smell fresh flesh, and will look for it.’ ‘ Ay do,’ replied she, ‘ And if I find any, (said he) that you have concealed from me, I’ll cut off your head.’ Frightened at this menace, she said to him, ‘ Be not angry my dear, and I will tell you the truth; I have got three young girls, that came here to day; but it is a pity to eat them; for they know how to do every thing, and as I am old, will be very serviceable to me. You know our house is very much out of order, our bread is not well baked, nor our beer well brewed, and I appear not so handsome since I have slaved myself with working; they shall be our servants, therefore do not eat them now; but if you have a great desire to them at any other time, you shall have them.’ The giant, with great reluctance, promised her not to eat them all three, but pressed hard for two; which she opposing, he then desired one of them; which she not acquiescing with, after great disputes he promised her not to eat them; for she designed, when he was gone abroad, to feast herself with them, and to pretend that they had made their escape.

The giant ordered his wife to bring them to him, at which they, poor creatures, were ready to die with fear; but the giantess encouraged them. When he saw them, he asked them what they could do? They answered, That they knew how to clean a house, and sew and spin, and make some ragouts, that all that tasted of them generally licked their plates clean; and that for making of bread, cakes, and patty-pans, they were famous. ‘ Well, well, (said the giant, who loved a dainty bit) make good your words; but, (said he to Finetta) how do you know when the oven is hot enough?’ ‘ I lay some

' some butter on it, sir, (replied she) and taste it with my tongue.' Thereupon he ordered her to heat the oven, and the princess made a terrible fire; for you must know, the giant's oven was as large as a stable, and he and his wife devoured as much bread as an army; and the giant, who overlooked them, eat an hundred cakes and piggins of milk. Love's Flower and Fair-Night prepared the paste: the giant said the oven was hot enough: Finetta told him, she would see whether it was so, and throwing some pounds of butter into the oven's mouth, told him it must be tasted with the tongue, but that she was too little to do it. ' Oh! (said he) I am big enough.' And thereupon he thrust himself so far in, that he could not get back again; but was burnt to ashes.

When the giant's wife came to the oven, she was surprised to find such a heap of ashes as proceeded from her burnt husband. Love's-Flower and Fair-Night, who saw her very much grieved, did what they could to comfort her; but at the same time, were afraid her sorrow would be too soon over, and her appetite come upon her. ' Madam, (said they) have courage, some king, or great prince, will think themselves happy to marry you.' Which made her laugh, and shew her long teeth, that were as large as a finger. When they saw her in a good humour, Finetta said to her, ' If you throw off these bear skins, with which you now clothe yourself, we will dress you a-la-mode, and you shall appear as bright as any star.' ' Let me see, (said she) what you would be at; but assure yourself, that if any ladies look better than me, I will make mince meat of you.' Whereupon the three princesses pulled of her cap, and combed and frizzled her hair; and while the two sisters were amusing her after that manner, Finetta with a hatchet, severed her head from her body at one blow.

Never was joy equal to their's; they ran up to the top of the house to ring the golden bells, went into all the chambers of pearls and diamonds, the furniture of which was so rich, that it was ecstasy to behold it. They laughed and sung all that day long, and almost glutted themselves with sweetmeats and other dainties. Love's-Flower and

Fair-Night laid in beds of brocade and velvet, and said one to another, ‘ Our father was never so rich in all his prosperity; but yet we want husbands, and may be assured nobody will ever come here, since this house passes for a place of destruction, since the giant and his wife’s death are unknown; therefore we must go to the next village to shew ourselves in our finery, and we shall not be long before we find persons enough who will be glad to marry princesses.’

As soon as they were dressed, they told Finetta they were going a-walking, and that she must stay there to take care of the house, and have every thing in order against they returned, or else they should make her feel their blows. When they were gone, Finetta, who was forced to scour and wash, was so overpowered with grief, that she burst out a-crying. ‘ How unhappy was I, (said she to herself) to disobey my godmother! all misfortunes have since attended me; my sisters have robbed me of my fine clothes, and dressed themselves in them. Had it not been for me, the giant and his wife had yet been alive; and what am I the better for their deaths; I should have been as well pleased to have been devoured by them, as to live as I do now.’ When she had said all this, she cried so much, that her eyes were almost swoln out of her head; and when her sisters came, she had the mortification to see them bring with them oranges, and sweetmeats, and fine fruits, and to hear them tell what respect they had paid by a king’s son at a ball they had been at; and withal, to be bid to come and undress them, and lay up their clothes; which she durst not refuse; for if ever she complained, they flew upon her, and beat her till they had left her for dead.

The next day they went again, and came back as before, and lived in that manner some time; when one night as Finetta was sitting over a handful of fire, not knowing what to do with herself, raking among the cinders, she found an old rusty cankered key; and after having taking a great deal of pains to scour it, found it to be gold, and thinking it might open some lock in the house

house, tried them all, and it belonged to a fine box, which she opened, wherein there were rich clothes, diamonds, laces, fine linen, ribbons, and things of great value. Never mentioning a word of this good fortune, she waited impatiently for her sisters going again the next day; and then as soon as she saw them out of doors, dressed herself so fine, that she appeared as fine as the sun, and went to the same ball; and though she had no mask on, yet her clothes had made so great an alteration in her for the better, that they did not know her. When she appeared in that assembly, there was heard a murmuring of voices, some out of admiration, and others of jealousy; and when she danced, she excelled as much therein as in her beauty.

Love's-Flower and Fair-Night, who had made there strange havock among the hearts, seeing the favourable reception this stranger met with, were ready to burst with jealousy; but Finetta, who behaved herself extraordinary well, seemed by her air, as if she was made to command. Love's-Flower and Fair-Night, who had been used to see their sister dirty and grimy, retained so small an idea of her face, that they knew her not, but paid as much respect to her as the rest; and she, as soon as the ball was over, ran home as fast as she could, and put on her dirty rags again. When her sisters came home, they told her they had seen a charming young princess, whose skin was as white as snow, the colour of her cheeks as fresh as a rose, her teeth as even and as white as ivory, and for her lips they looked like coral, and that her clothes were all of gold and diamonds. This sport continued some time, and Finetta every ball appeared in a different dress; for the chest was inexhaustible, and the clothes were all so fashionable, that the ladies followed that mode.

One night that Finetta had danced very much, and had staid longer than ordinary, and was willing to get home soon enough, that she might not be discovered by her sisters, she made so much haste, that she lost her slipper, which was of red velvet, braided with pearls, and was found the next day by the prince of Chery, the king's eldest

eldest son, as he was hunting, and admired it so much for its smallness, that he kissed it, and carried it home with him; and from that day, grew so melancholy, and referred, that he never would speak, lost his stomach, fell away, and looked so ill, that the king and queen, who loved him to distraction, sent for all the remedies and assistance they could get; but all to no purpose, for the physicians, after they had consulted together, and made their observations for two or three days together, concluded that he was in love, and would die unless he had some relief.

The queen, who doated on him, cried day and night over him: but could make no discovery who the beloved person was. She brought all the most beautiful ladies of the court into his chamber, but he would not so much as look at them. At last, the queen said to him one day. ‘ My dear child, you overwhelm us with grief; we know you are in love, wherefore then should you hide it from us? Tell who the lovely person is, and should she prove a shepherdess, we will not oppose your desires.’ Hereupon the prince grown more bold by the queen’s promises, pulled the slipper from under his bolster: ‘ This madam (said he) is the cause of my illness; I found this pretty little slipper as I was one day a-hunting, and am resolved never to marry any but the person who can draw it on.’ ‘ Alas! child, (said the queen) grieve not, we shall soon find her out.’ And then she left them, and told the king, who was very much surprised at the strangeness of his passion, and ordered to be proclaimed by sound of trumpet, That all women should come and try on the slipper, and that the person whom it fitted should be married to the prince.

Upon this, all the fine ladies of the court washed and paired their feet, and made choice of the thinnest stockings, that they might put on the slipper; but all to no purpose, since none of them could get it on; which was no small affliction to the prince. Love’s-Flower and Fair-Night, upon this, dressed themselves so fine one day, that Finetta was amazed, and asked them where they were going? Who told her, to court, to try on the slipper

slipper that the king's son had found, and that whoever succeeded, was to marry him. Whereupon Finetta asked, if she might not go? Which made them laugh at her, and tell her, they wondered how such a dirty girl as she could have any such thoughts, bidding her water the garden, for she was fit for nothing else.

When they were gone, Finetta had a great mind to try her fortune, having a strong fancy of her success; but was something at a loss, because she knew not the way: for the ball she was at before was not kept at court. However, she dressed herself very magnificently, her gown was of blue fatten, covered over with stars of diamonds; a full moon was placed in the middle of her back, and a sun upon her head, which gave such a lustre, as dazzled the eyes of the spectators. When she opened the door to go out, she was very much surprised to find the Spanish horse there; she carressed him, and was overjoyed to see him, and mounted on him, appeared a thousand times more beautiful than Helen. The horse went prancing along, and by the noise he made with champing of his bits, made Love's-Flower and her sister look behind, to see who was coming after them; but how great was their astonishment, when they saw it was Finetta! ‘I protest, (said Love's Flower to Fair Night) ‘tis Finetta;’ and the other was about to make some reply, when the horse passing by, dashed them all over with dirt; whereupon Finetta told them, that she despised them as they deserved, and so put forward. ‘Certainly, (said Fair-Night) we dream; who could have furnished her with this horse and fine cloaths? ‘Tis a miracle to me: she will, without dispute, have the good fortune to get the slipper, therefore ‘tis in vain for us to go any farther.’

While they were in the utmost rage and despair, Finetta arrived at the palace, where she being taken for a queen, the guards were under arms, with drums beating and trumpets sounding. She went into the prince's chamber, who no sooner set his eyes on her, but he was charmed, and wished her foot small enough to put on the

the slipper; which she not only did do, but also produced the fellow to it. Upon which all persons present cried, *Long live the Princess;* and the prince arose from off his bed, came and kissed her hand, and declared to her his passion. As soon as the king and queen heard of it, they came overjoyed; the queen flung her arms about her neck, and embraced her, and called her daughter. The king and queen made her great presents, the cannons were fired, and there were the most public demonstrations of joy possible.

The prince desired she would consent to his happiness, and that they might be married; which she refused till she had told him her adventures, which she did in a few words. Their joy was augmented so much the more, when they knew her to be a princess by birth; and, upon acquainting them with the names of her father and mother, informed her that they had deprived them of their kingdoms. As soon as she knew that, she vowed never to give her hand to the prince, unless they were restored again to their dominions, which the king her father-in-law made no scruple to grant. In the mean time, Love's-Flower and Fair-Night arrived, and the first news they heard, was, that their sister had put on the slipper, and were so much confused, that they knew not what to say or do; but at last were for going back again; when she hearing that they were there, sent for them, and, instead of using them as they deserved, met them, and embraced them, afterwards presented them to the queen, acquainted her that they were her sisters, for whom she desired she would have some respect. They were so much surprised at their sister's goodness, that they stood speechless; but, upon her telling them that the prince her spouse would restore the king their father, and send them into their own country, they fell on their knees before her, and wept for joy.

The nuptials were celebrated with all the pomp imaginable; Finetta writ a letter to her god-mother, which she sent with great presents by the Spanish horse, desiring her to find out the king and queen her father and mother, and let them know her good fortune, that they might

return to their own kingdoms; which commission the fairy acquitted herself of, and the king and queen were restored to their dominions. Love's-Flower and Fair-Night lived as great and happy as they could desire, and became afterwards great queens, as well as their sister.

The Morality of this Tale is, that while we act consistently with virtuous Principles, however Misfortunes may attend, yet in the End, Happiness will succeed; and such as are good will ever meet a just Reward.

T H E S T O R Y

O F T H E

W H I T E C A T.

THERE was a king who had three sons, all handsome, brave young gentlemen; but jealous that they should desire to reign before his death, he caused several reports to be spread abroad, that they endeavoured to procure themselves creatures to deprive him of his crown. The king found himself very old, but his sense and capacity of government no ways decayed; so that he cared not to resign up a place he filled so worthily, and thought that the best way for him to live at quiet,

quiet, was to amuse them by promises. To this end he took them into his closet, where, after he had talked to them with great candour, he said, ‘ You will agree with me, my children, that my great age will not allow me to apply myself to the affairs of the public with as much care as formerly; and I am afraid my subjects will not be so well pleased with my administration. Therefore I intend to resign my crown to one of you. But as it is very just that you should strive to please me with such a present, and as I design to retire into the country, I should be very glad to have a pretty little dog to keep me company, therefore, without having more regard to my eldest than my youngest, I declare to you, that he of you who brings me the most beautiful dog, shall be my heir.’

The three princes were very much surprised at their father’s desire for a little dog. For the two younger, they were extraordinarily well pleased at this proposal: and for the elder, he was either too timorous or respectful to represent his right. However they took their leaves of the king, who gave them money and jewels, telling them, that they must all return without fail in a year’s time, on a certain day with the dogs. But before they set out on this search, they all went to a castle, three leagues off, where they made an entertainment, and invited their most trusty friends and confidants, before whom the three brothers swore an eternal friendship to one another, promising never to be jealous of each other’s good fortune; but that the most successful should let the other two partake with him, appointing that castle for their place of rendezvous, and from thence to go all together to the king.

They every one took a different road without any attendants; and for the two eldest, they had a great many adventures: but as the particulars are not so well known to me, I shall pass them over in silence, and speak only of the youngest, who was a prince of a sweet behaviour, exact shape, fine features, had delicate teeth, performed all exercises fit for a prince with a good grace; and to sum up all in one, was a youth of bright parts, and

and brave even to a fault: besides he sang very agreeably, and played on the lute and the organ to admiration, and painted with great judgment. Not a day passed over his head, but he bought dogs of some kind or other, as hounds, grey-hounds, spaniels, &c. that were pretty, keeping always the most beautiful, and letting the others go; for it was impossible for him to keep all the dogs he had purchased, since he had neither gentleman, page, nor any other person along with him: however, he kept going on, without fixing on any certain place: when he was surprised one night in a large forest, where he could find no shelter, by a storm of thunder, lightning, and rain. Still he pursued the road, and went a long way, when seeing a small light, he persuaded himself some house was nigh, where he might get a lodging that night. Following the lights, he arrived at the gates of a stately castle, which were all of massy gold; in which were reflectors which gave that extraordinary light which the prince saw so far off. The walls were of fine china, whereon the histories of all the Fairies since the creation of the world were represented; but the rain and ill-weather would not suffer our prince to stay to examine them all, though he was charmed to find the adventures of prince Lutin, who was his uncle among the rest.

He returned to the door, after having rambled some paces off, and there found a deer's foot at the end of a chain of diamonds, which made him admire the magnificence: he pulled, and soon heard a bell, which by the sound, he judged to be either gold or silver; and some time after the door opened, and he saw no person, but only twelve hands, each hold a flambeau; at which sight he was very much surprised, and was in dispute whether or no he should proceed any farther, when, to his great amazement he felt some others behind him, which pushed him forwards; whereupon he advanced with his hand on his sword, though very uneasy, and, as he thought, in some danger: when going into a wardrobe of porphyry and lapis lazuli, he heard two sweet voices sing these words:

With

With unconcern behold those hands,
And dread no false alarms,
If you are sure you can withstand
The force of beauty's charms.

He could not believe he was invited so kindly to suffer any injury, which made him, finding himself forced forwards, to go to a great gate of coral, which opened as soon as he approached it, and he went into a hall of mother o'pearl, and thence into several chambers adorned and enriched with paintings and jewels: a vast number of lights that were let down from the cieling of the hall, contributed to light some part of the other apartments, which besides were hung round with glas fencs. In shourt, the magnificence was almost incredible. After having gone into sixty chambers, the hand that conducted him stopt him, and he saw a great easy chair make up towards him; the fire lit of itself, and the hands, which were both white and finely proportioned, undress'd him, he being wet, and in some danger of catching cold. A fine shirt and a night-gown of gold brocade, with cyphers and small emeralds, were given him, and a table and toilet brought by these hands. Every thing was very grand: the hands comb'd out his hair with a lightnes that gave him pleasure, and afterwards dressed him in extraordinary fine cloaths, while he not only silently admired them, but at last began to be in some little fright. When he was dressed that he seemed as beautiful as Adonis, they conducted him into a stately hall richly furnished, where he saw in a fine painting, the stories of the most famous cats; as Rodillardus hung by the heels in a council of rats, the Cat in Boots, the Marquis de Corabus the Writing Cat, the Cat turn'd Woman, Witches in the shape of Cats, with their nightly meetings, &c. all very odd and singular.

Two cloths were laid, both garnished with gold plate, with beaufets set out with vast numbers of glasses, and cups made of valuable stones; and while the prince was thinking with himself, what they were laid for, he saw some cats come and place themselves upon a bench set there

for that purpose, one holding a music-book, another with a roll of paper, to beat time with, and the rest with small guittars: when all on a sudden, they every one set up a mewing in different tones, and struck the strings with their talons, which made the strangest musick that ever was heard. The prince would have thought himself in hell, if the palace had not been so wonderful fine, it put him so much in mind of it; then stopping his ears, he laughed heartily at the several postures and grimaces of these strange musicians. And while he was calling to mind the several things that had happened since his being in this castle, he saw a little figure about half a yard high came forward in a vale of black crape, led by two cats in mourning cloaks, with swords by their sides, and followed by a numerous train of cats; some carrying rats, and some mice in traps and cages.

The prince was in the greatest amazement, and knew not what to think; when the little figure in black coming up to him, and lifting up its veil, he saw the prettiest little white cat he ever had set his eyes on, which seemed to be young, but withal very melancholy, and set up such an agreeable mewing, as went to the prince's heart. Prince, (said she) you are welcome; 'it is a pleasure to me to see you here.' 'Madam' Puss, (replied the prince) you are very generous to 'receive me so graciously; but you appear to me to 'be a cat of extraordinary merit: for the gift you have 'of speech, and this stately castle you posses, are con- 'vincing proofs of it.' 'Prince, (answered the White 'Cat) I desire you would forbear your compliments, 'for I am both plain in my discourse and manners, 'but have a good heart. Let us go, (said she) to sup- 'per, and bid the musicians leave off, for the prince does 'not understand what they say.' What, (said he) do 'they then say any thing?' 'Yes, (answered the White 'Cat) we have poets, and great wits, and if you will 'stay with us, you shall be convinced of it. 'I need 'but hear you speak to believe that, (answered he, gal- 'lantly) for I look on you as on something more than 'common.'

Supper was brought up, the hands set on the table two dishes of soup, one made of young pigeons, and the other of fat mice. The sight of the one hindered the prince from eating the other, fancying that the same cook had dressed both; which the White Cat guessed at, assured him that she had two kitchens, and that he might eat of whatever was set before him, and be confident there were no rats or mice in any thing offered him. The prince, who believed that this beautiful cat would not deceive him, wanted not to be told so twice. He observed a little picture to hang upon her foot, at which he was not a little surprised and asked her to shew it him, thinking it might be some fine puss, a lover of the White Cat; but was in a maze to see a handsome young man, who resembled him very much. The White Cat sighed, and growing melancholy, kept a profound silence. The prince perceiving that there was something extraordinary in it, but durst not inform himself for fear of displeasing or grieving his kind entertainer. He diverted her with all the news he knew, and found her well acquainted with the different interests of princes, and other things that passed in the world. When supper was done, the White Cat carried her guest into a hall, where there was a stage, on which twelve cats, and as many apes, danced a mask in Moorish and Chinese habits; and when this was over, the White Cat bid her guest good-night, and the hands led him into an apartment opposite to that which he had seen, but no less magnificent: It was hung with tapestry, made of the wings of butterflies, the variety of which colours formed most beautiful flowers. The bed was of fine gauze, tied with bunches of ribbon, and the glasses reached from the cieling down to the floor, and the panels between represented, in carved work, thousands of cupids.

The prince went to bed, and slept a little; but was awakened again by a confused noise. The hands took him out of bed, and put on him a hunting habit. He looked out of the window, and saw above five hundred cats, some leading greyhounds, and others blowing horns!

it being that day a great feast, whereon the White Cat had a mind to go a hunting, and was willing that the prince should partake of that diversion. The hands presented to him a wooden horse, that had a good speed and easy paces, which he made some scruple to mount, alledging, they took him for Don Quixotte; but his refusal signified nothing, they set him on the wooden horse, which was finely caparisoned, with a saddle and housing of gold, beset with diamonds. The White Cat rid on a most beautiful ape, having thrown off her veil, and put on a hat and feather, which gave her so bold an air, as frightened all the mice that saw her. Never was there better sport; the cats out-run the mice and rabbits, and whenever they took one, the White Cat always paunch'd its pray, and gave them their fees. For the birds they were not in much greater security; the cats climb'd the trees, and the ape carried the White Cat up to the eagles nests. When the chase was over, she took a horn of about a finger's length, which, when sounded, was so loud, that it might be heard soine leagues; and as soon as she blowed, she had presently all the cats in the country about her, some mounted in chariots in the air, and some in boats, but all in different habits, which made a fine show. With this pompous train she and the prince returned to her castle, who thought it favored very much of sorcery; but was more surprised at the cat's speaking than all the rest.

As soon as she came home, she put on her black veil again, and supped with the prince, whom the fresh air had got a good stomach; the hands brought him fine liquors, which he not only drank off with pleasure, but made him forget the little dog he was to procure for his father: his thoughts were bent on bearing the White Cat company, and he spent his time in hunting and fishing, and sometimes in balls and plays. The White Cat made such passionate songs and verses, that he began to think she had a tender heart, since she could not express herself as he did, and be insensible of the power of love, but her secretary, who was an old cat, wrote so bad a hand, that should any of her works remain, it

would be impossible to read them. The prince had forgot his country, the hand still waited on him, and he regretted his not being a cat, that he might pass his life in such pleasant company. ‘ Alas! (said he to the ‘ White Cat) how sorry am I to leave you, since I love ‘ you dearly! Either become a woman, or change me ‘ into a cat.’ Which wish the White Cat only answered in obscure words, though she was mightily pleased with it.

Thus a year flipt away free from care and pain. The White Cat knew the time he was to return, and as he did not think of it, put him in mind thereof. ‘ Don’t ‘ you know, (said she) that you have but three days to ‘ find a litt’e dog in, and that your brothers have got ‘ some very fine ones?’ This rouzed the prince out of his lethargy: ‘ By what secret charm, (cried he) have ‘ I forgot the only thing in the world, that is of the ‘ greatest importance to me? What will become of my ‘ honour and fortune? Where shall I find a little dog ‘ beautiful enough to gain a kingdom, and a horse ‘ swift enough to make diligent search after one?’ Then beginning to afflict himself, and grew uneasy, the White Cat said to him, ‘ Do not grieve, prince, I am ‘ your friend; you may stay here a day longer yet; ‘ for though it is five hundred leagues off, the good ‘ wooden horse will carry you there in less than twelve ‘ hours.’ ‘ I thank you beautiful Cat, (said he) but ‘ tis not enough for me to return to my father; I must ‘ carry with me a little dog.’ ‘ Here, take this acorn, ‘ (said the White Cat) it has a beautiful little dog in ‘ it; put it to your ear, and you will hear it bark.’ The prince obeyed, heard it bark, and was transported with joy: he would have opened it, so great was his curiosity; but the White Cat told him it might catch cold, and he had better stay till he gave it to his father. He thanked her a thousand times, and bid her a tender farewell, assuring her that he never passed his days so pleasantly as with her, and that he was grieved to leave her behind him: adding, that though she was a sovereign, and had great court paid to her, yet he could not forbear

forbear asking her to go along with him: to which position she answered only with a sigh.

The prince came first to the castle, that was appointed for the rendezvous with his brothers, who arrived soon after, but were very much surprised to see a wooden horse in the court, that leaped better than any in the academies. The prince went to meet them; they embraced, and gave each other an account of their adventures; but our prince took care to conceal the truth of his, and shewed them only an ugly turnspit, telling them that he thought him very pretty: At which, though they were very good friends, the two eldest conceived a secret joy. The next day they all three went in the same coach to the king. The two eldest carried their dogs in baskets so white and delicate, that none durst hardly touch them; and the youngest had his poor despicable turnspit in a string. When they came to the palace, the courtiers crowded about them to welcome them home. The king, when they came into his apartment, knew not in whose favour to declare, for the two little dogs that the elder brothers brought were almost of equal beauty, when the youngest pulling the acorn out of his pocket, which the White Cat gave him, put an end to the difference. As soon as he opened it, they all saw a little dog laid on cotton, and so small, that he might go through a ring without touching it. The prince sat it on the ground, and presently it began to dance a saraband, with castanets, as nimble and as well as the best Spaniard. It was of a mixture of several colours, its ears and long hair reached the ground. The king was very much surprised, and thought it was impossible to meet with any thing so beautiful as Tonton, by which name it was called, yet he was not very ready to part with his crown, the least gem of which, was dearer to him than all the dogs in the world. He told his children, that he was very well pleased with the pains they had taken, but they had succeeded so well in the first thing he had desired, that he had a mind to make further proof of their abilities before he performed his promise: And that was, he would give them a year to find

out a fine web of cloth fine enough to go through the eye of a small working needle. They all stood surprised and concerned, that they were to go again upon another search; however, the two elder seemed the most ready, and all three parted with ut making so great a profession of friendship as they did the first time, for the story of the turnspit had somewhat abated it.

Our prince mounted his wooden horse again, and without looking after any other assistance, than what he might expect from the friendship of the White Cat, returned in all diligence to the castle, where he had been so well received; where he not only found all the doors open, but the windows, walls, and walks illuminated. The hands came and met him, held his horse's bridle, and led him into the stable, while the prince went to the White Cat's chamber, who was laid in a little basket, on a quilt of white fattin. When she saw the prince, she made a thousand skips and jumps, to express her joy, and said, ‘ Whatever reason I might have, ‘ Prince, to hope for your return, I must own I durst ‘ not flatter myself with it; since I am generally un- ‘ happy in what I most desire, therefore this surprises ‘ me.’ The prince, full of acknowledgement, caressed her often, and told her the succets he had in his journey, which she was not unacquainted with, and that the king required a web of cloth so fine, as it might be drawn through the eye of a needle, which he believed was a thing impossible; but that however he would not fail to try to procure such a one, relying on her friendship and assistance. The White Cat, putting on a grave air, told him it was an affair that required some consideration, that by good fortune she had in her castle some cats that spun very fine, that she would do what she could to forward that work, so that he might stay there, and not trouble himself to search elsewhere, it being unlikely for him to meet with any so easily.

Soon after the hands appeared, carrying flambeaux, and the prince followed the White Cat into a Magnificent gallery that looked on to a river, upon which there were some artificial fire-works, made to burn four cats,

who

who had been accused and convicted of eating some roast-meat, designed for the White Cat's supper; with some cheese and milk; and besides, for conspiring against her person with Martifax and Lermites, two famous rats in that country: But as it was thought that there was a great deal of injustice done them, and that most of the witnesses were suborned, the prince obtained their pardon; notwithstanding, the fire-works were let off, which gave the prince very great diversion. Afterwards a genteel repast was served up, which gave the prince more pleasure than the fire, for his riding had got him an extraordinary stomach: For the rest of the time, he spent it in agreeable entertainments, with which the ingenious White Cat diverted her guests, who was perhaps the first mortal that was so well entertained by cats without any other company. Indeed the White Cat had a ready wit, and could discourse on any subject, which often put the prince into a great consternation, and made him say to her, ‘ Certainly, all this that I observe so wonderful in you, cannot be natural; therefore tell me by what prodigy you think and speak so justly?’ Forbear asking me any questions, prince, (said she) for I am not allowed to answer them, but you may conjecture what you please; let it suffice that I have used you with respect, and that I interest myself tenderly in what regards you.’

The second year rolled away insensibly, as well as the first: the prince wished for nothing, but the diligent hands brought to him, whether books, jewels, fine pictures, or antique medals, &c. when the White Cat, who was always watchful for the prince's interest, informed him that the time of his departure drew nigh: but that he might be easy concerning the web of cloth, for she had a wonderful fine one made; and added withal, that this time she would give him an equipage suitable to his birth, and without waiting for an answer, obliged him to look into the great court of the castle, in which there waited an open chariot of embossed work in gold, in several gallant devices, drawn by twelve milk-white horses, four a-breast, whose harnesses were covered with

velvet of fire-colour, which was the same as the lining of the chariot, beset with diamonds, and the buckles of gold. An hundred coaches with eight horses, full of the lords of his retinue, magnificently cloathed, followed his chariot, which was guarded besides by a thousand body-guards, whose cloathing was so full of embroidery, that the cloth was hardly discovered; and what is very singular, the White Cat's picture was seen every where, both in the devices on the chariot, and on the guards. ' Go, prince, (said she) and appear at the king your father's court, in so stately a manner, that your magnificence may serve to impress on him, that he may refuse you no lenger the crown you deserve. Take this walnut, be sure to crack it in his presence, and you will find in it such a web as you want.' ' Lovely White Cat, (said he) I own I am so penetrated with your bounty, that if you will give your consent I will prefer passing my days with you, before all the grandeur I may promise myself elsewhere.' ' Prince (replied she) I am persuaded of the kindness of your heart, which is a rare thing among princes, who would be respected by all the world, and love none but themselves; but you shew me this rule is not general. I make great account of the attachment you have for a little White Cat, that in the main is fit for nothing but to catch mice.'

At that the prince kissed her paw, and went away.

It is almost incredible to believe the haste he made, were we unacquainted with the swiftness of the wooden horse, who carried him before five hundred thousand leagues in less than two days; and the same power that animated him, had so great an effect upon the others, that he was not above four-and-twenty hours upon the road, and never stopt till he arrived at the king's palace, where his two brothers had got before him; who seeing he was not come, rejoiced at his negligence, and said to one another, ' How fortunate is this? he is either sick or dead, and will not come to rival us in this important business.' Thereupon they pulled out their webs; which were indeed very fine, and passed them through the eye of a large needle, but not a small one; which

pretext

pretext of refusal the king embracing, went and fetched the needle he proposed, which the magistrates, by his order, had carried to the treasury, and locked up carefully: This refusal raised a great murmuring: Those that were friends to the princes, and particularly the eldest, whose web was the finest, said it was all a trick and evasion: And the king's creatures maintained, that he was not obliged to keep any other conditions than what were proposed; when, to put an end to this difference, there was heard a sounding of trumpets and hautboys, which came before our prince.

The king and his sons were all surprised at this magnificence. The prince, after he had respectfully saluted his father, and embraced his brothers, took out of his box, covered with rubies, a walnut which he cracked, thinking to find the web so much boasted of; but only saw a small hazel nut, which he cracked also, and to his surprise found only a kernel of wax. The king and every body laughed, to think that the prince had been so credulous as to think to carry a web of cloth in a nut: but had they recollect ed themselves, they might have remembered the little dog that lay in an acorn. However he peeled the kernel, and nothing appeared but the pulp itself, whereupon a great noise was heard all over the room, every one having it in his mouth what a fool the prince was made of; who, for his part, returned no answer to all the pleasantries of the courtiers, but broke the kernel, and found in it a corn of wheat, and in that a grain of millet. At the sight of this he began to distrust, and muttered to himself, ‘ O White Cat! White Cat! thou hast deceived me! And at that instant he felt a cat's paw upon his hand, which scratched him, and fetched blood; he knew not whether it was to encourage or dismay him. However, he opened the millet seed, and to the amazement of all present, drew out a web of cloth, four hundred yards long! and what was more wonderful, there were painted on it all sorts of birds, beasts and fish; fruits, trees and plants; rocks, and all manner of rare shells of the sea; the sun, moon, stars and planets; and all the pictures of all the kings and princes of the world, with those of their wives, mistresses and children, all dressed after the fashion of

their own country. When the king saw this piece of cloth, he turned as pale as the prince was red in looking so long for it, and the needle was brought, and it was put through five or six times; all which time, the king and his two sons were silent, though afterwards, the beauty and rarity of the cloth was so great, they said it was not to be matched in the whole world. The king fetched a deep sigh, and turning himself towards his children, said to them! ‘ Nothing gives me so much comfort in my hold age, as to be sensible of the deference you have for me, which makes me desirous of putting you to a new trial. Go and travel another year, and he that brings me the most beautiful damsel, shall marry her, and be crowned king, there being an absolute necessity that my successor should marry; and I swear and promise. I will no longer defer the reward.’

Our prince suffered all this injustice; the little dog and the web of cloth rather deserved ten crowns than one; but he was of so sweet a disposition, that he would not thwart his father’s will: so without any delay he got into his chariot again, and with his train returned to his dear White Cat, who knowing the day and moment he would come, had the roads strewed with flowers. She was laid on a persian tapestry, under a canopy of cloth of gold, in a gallery from whence she could see him return. He was received by the hands that always served him, and all the cats cliued upon the gutter to congratulate his return by a concert of mewing. ‘ Well, prince, (said she to him) I see you are come back without your crown.’ ‘ Madam, (replied he) by your bounty I was in a condition of gaining it; but I am persuaded the king is more loth to part with it than I am fond of having it.’ No matter for that (said she) you must neglect nothing to deserve it, I will assist you on this occasion; and since you must carry a beautiful damsel to your father’s court, I will look out for one, who shall gain you the prize: but in the interim, let us be merry, and divert ourselves. I have ordered a sea-fight between my cats and the most terrible rats of the country.

'try. My cats perhaps may be hard set, for they are afraid of the water; however, they will have advantage enough: we cannot expect it in every thing.' The prince returned her thanks, and said several very handsome things on her conduct and prudence. Afterwards they went upon a terrass which looked on to the sea. The cats' vessels consisted of great pieces of cork, on which they floated very commodiously: and these of the rats of egg-shells joined together. The fight was very obstinate; the rats threw themselves into the water, and swam better than the cats, insomuch that they as often conquered, as they were conquered; when Mina-grobis, the admiral of the cats, reduced the rattish race to the utmost despair, by eating up the admiral of their fleet, who was an old experienced rat, that had made three voyages round the world in very good ships, in which he was neither captain nor sailor, but only a kind of interloper. But the White Cat was so politic, that she would not absolutely destroy these poor unfortunate rats, thinking that if there were no rats nor mice, her subjects would live in an idleness that might become prejudicial to her.

The prince passed this year, as he had done the two first, in hunting, fishing, and such diversions, and often at a game of chess, which the White Cat played extraordinary well at; but he could not forbear often questioning her, to know by what miracle she spoke. He asked her, if she was a fairy, or if by any metamorphosis she was turned into a cat. But as the White Cat was always capable of saying what she had a mind to, she returned him an answer so insignificant, that he perceived she was not willing to communicate this secret to him. As nothing passes away so quick as happy days, if the White Cat had not been so careful as to remember the time the prince was to return, 'tis certain he would have quite forgot it. She told him of it the night before, and withal, that the hour of destroying the fatal work of the fairies was come; and therefore he must resolve to cut off her head and tail, and throw them presently into the fire. 'What, (cried he)

' shall I my lovely White Cat, be so barbarous as to kill you? you have undoubtedly a mind to make proof of my heart, but be assured it is incapable of wanting that friendship and acknowledgment due to you.' ' No prince, (continued she) I do not suspect you of ingratitude: I know your merit; but neither you nor I can prescribe to fate: do what I desire you, we shall thereby be happy: and you shall know upon the word of a cat of worth and honour, that I am really your friend.' Tears started two or three times in the young prince's eyes, to think he must cut off the head of his pretty White Cat, that had been so kind to him; he said all that he could think most tender to engage her to dispense with him: to which she answered obstinately, she would die by his hand, and that was the only way to hinder his brother from having the crown. In short, she pressed him so earnestly, that he trembling, with an unsteady hand, cut off her head and tail, and threw them presently into the fire; and at the same time saw the most charming metamorphosis imaginable. The body of the White Cat grew presently large, and changed all on a sudden to a fine lady, so accomplished, as exceeds description. Her eyes committed thest upon all hearts, and her sweetness kept them: her shape was majestic, her air noble and modest, her wit flowing, her manners engaging; in a word, she was beyond every thing that was lovely.

The prince, at the sight of her, was in of agreeable surprise, that he thought himself enchanted. He could not speak nor look at her, and his tongue was so tied, that he could not explain his amazement; which was much greater, when he saw an extraordinary number of gentlemen, and ladies, holding their cat-skins over their shoulders, come and prostrate themselves at the queen's feet, to testify their joy to see her again in her natural slate. She received them with all the marks of bounty, which sufficiently discovered the sweetness of her temper. After having spent sometime in hearing their compliments, she ordered them to retire,

and

and leave her alone with the prince; to whom she spoke as follows.

' Think not, sir, that I have always been a cat, and
' that my birth is obscure. My father was king of
' six kingdoms, loved my mother tenderly, and gave
' her liberty to do what she pleased. Her most pre-
' vailing inclination was to travel, insomuch that when
' she was with child of me, she undertook to go and see
' a mountain, of which she had heard a most surpris-
' ing account. As she was on the road she was told
' there was, nigh the place she was then at, an ancient
' castle of fairies, which was the finest in the world, or
' at least said to be so; for as no person was ever ad-
' mitted into it, there could not be any positive
' judgment passed thereon: but for the gardens, they
' were known to contain the best fruits that ever were
' eat. The queen-my mother, who longed to taste
' them, went thither. But when she came to the gate
' of this stately edifice, which shined again with blue,
' enameled with gold; nobody came, though she knocked
' a long time; and her desire increasing the more, by
' reason of the difficulty, she sent for ladders to scale
' the walls: but they growing visibly to a great height
' of themselves, they were forced to fasten the ladders
' to one another, to lengthen them, and whenever any
' one went up them, they broke under their weight;
' so that they were either killed or lamed. The queen
' was in the utmost despair to see trees loaded with
' such delicious fruits, and not to taste of them, which
' she was resolved to do, or die: insomuch that she
' ordered some rich tents to be pitched before the castle,
' and stayed there six weeks, with all her court. She
' neither slept nor eat, but sighed continually, and was
' always talking of the fruit. In short, she fell dan-
' gerously ill, and no remedy could be found out, for
' the inexorable fairies never appeared from the time
' she came there. All her court were very much griev-
' ed: there was nought to be heard but sighs and la-
' mentations, while the dying queen was continually
' asking those that were in waiting upon her, for fruit;

but

but would eat of none but what came out of this garden.

One Night, after having got a little sleep, when she awakened she saw a little ugly decrepit old woman sit in an elbow chair by her bolster, and was surprised that her women should suffer a stranger so near her, when she said to her, ‘ We think your majesty very importunate to be so stubborn in your desires of eating our fruits; but since your life is in danger, my sisters and I have consented to give you as much as you can carry away, and to let you eat of them as long as you stay here, provided you will make us one present.’ ‘ Ah! my good mother, (cried the queen) name it, I will give you my kingdoms, heart, and soul, to have some of the fruit: I cannot buy it too dear.’ ‘ We would have your majesty (said she) give us the daughter you now bear in your womb. As soon as she is born, we will come and fetch her; she shall be brought up by us, and we will endow her with all virtues, beauties, and sciences: in short, she shall be our child, and we will make her happy: but your majesty must observe, that you must never see her any more till she is married. If you will agree to this proposition, I will cure you immediately, and carry you to our orchard, where, notwithstanding it is night, you shall see well enough to chuse what you would have; but if what I say displeases your majesty, good-night.’ ‘ Though what you impose on me, (replied the queen) is very hard, yet I accept it rather than die; for certainly, if I cannot live, my child must be lost; therefore, skilfulness, (continued she) cure me, and let me not be a moment debarred of the privileges I am entitled to thereby.’

The fairy touched her with a little golden wand, saying, ‘ Your majesty is free from all illness.’ And thereupon she seemed as if she had thrown off a heavy garment that had been very troublesome and incommodious to her. She ordered all the ladies of her court to be called, and, with a gay air, told them she was

‘ was extraordinary well, and would rise, since that the gates of the fairies palace, which were so strongly barrocaded, were set open for her to eat of the fruit, and carry what she pleased away. The ladies thought the queen delirious, and she was then dreaming of the fruit she longed so much for; insomuch, that instead of returning any answer, they fell a-crying, and called in the physicians; which delays put the queen into the utmost despair; she asked for her clothes, and they refusing her them, put her into a violent passion, which they looked upon as her fever. In the interim the physicians came, who, after having felt her pulse, and made their inquiries, could not deny but that she was in perfect health. The ladies seeing the fault they had committed through their great zeal, endeavoured to repair it by dressing her quickly. They every one begged her pardon, which she granted, and hastened to follow the old fairy, who waited for her. She went into the palace, where nothing was wanting to make it the finest in the world; which you will the mere easily believe, sir, (added the new metamorphosed queen) when I shall tell you it was this we are now in. Two other fairies, not quite so old as she that conducted my mother, received her favourably at the gate; she desired them to carry her presently into the garden, and to those trees that bore the best fruits. They told her they were all equally good, and that unless she would have the pleasure of gathering them herself, they would call them too her. ‘ I beg, (said the queen) that I may have the satisfaction of seeing so extraordinary an event.’ Whereupon the elder of the three put her fingers in her mouth, and blowed three times; and then cried, apricots, peaches, nectarines, plumbs, cherries, pears, melons, grapes, apples, oranges, lemons, gooseberries, currants, strawberries, raspberries, come all at my call.’ ‘ But, (said the queen) these fruits are not all ripe in the same season.’ ‘ Oh, (said they) in our gardens we have all sorts of fruit always ripe and good, and they never diminish.’

‘ At

' At the same time they came rolling to them without any bruises; and the queen, who was impatient to satisfy her longing, fell upon them, and took the first that offered, which she rather devoured than eat. When her appetite was somewhat satisfied she desired the fairies to let her go to the trees, and have the pleasure to gather them herself: to which they gave their consent; but said to her, at the same time, you must remember the promise you have made us; for you will not be allowed to run back from it. I am persuaded, (replied she) that it is so pleasant living with you, and this palace is so charming, that if I did not love the king my husband dearly, I would offer myself; therefore you need not fear my retracting from my word. The fairies, who were very well satisfied, opened the doors of their gardens and all their inclosures, and the queen stayed in them three days and nights, without ever stirring out, so delicious she found them. She gathered fruit for her provision, and as they never wasted, loaded four hundred mules she brought along with her. The fairies added to their fruit, baskets of gold of curious work, to carry them in, and many other very valuable rarities. They promised to educate and make me a complete princess, and to chuse me out an husband, and to inform my mother of the wedding.

' The king was overjoyed at the queen's return, and all the court expressed their pleasure to see her again; there was nothing but balls, masquerades, and courses, where the fruits the queen brought, served for delicious regales. The king prefered them before all other things, but knew not the bargain she had made with the fairies: but often asked her what country she had been in, to bring home such good things: to which she replied, she found them on a mountain that was almost inaccessible; sometimes that she met with them in a valley, and sometimes in the midst of a garden or a great forest: all which contradictions very much surprised the king. He inquired of those that went with her; but they were all for-
bid

bid to tell any thing of the matter. At length the queen, when her time was at hand, began to be troubled at what she had promised the fairies, and grew very melancholy; she fighed every minute, and changed her countenance. The king was very much concerned, and pressed the queen to declare what was the cause; who with some difficulty told him what had passed between her and the fairies, and that she had promise i them the daughter she was then big with. What! (cried the king) we have no children, and could you, who knew how much I desired them, for the eating of two or three apples, promise your daughter? certainly you must have no regard for me.' and thereupon he loaded her with a thousand reproaches, which made my poor mother almost ready to die for grief: but not content with this, he put her into a tower, under a strong guard, where she could have no conversation but with the officers that were appointed to attend her. The ill correspondence between the king and queen, put the court into the utmost consternation: they laid aside their rich clothes, and put on such as were agreeable to the general sorrow. The king appeared for his part inexorable, and would not see the queen; but as soon as I was born, made me be brought into the palace to be nursed there, while my mother, at the same time, remained a prisoner, and in an ill state of health. The fairies, who were not ignorant all this while of what was passed, and who looked upon me as their own property, were so provoked, that they resolved to have me; but before they had recourse to their art, they sent ambassadors to the king, to desire him to set the queen at liberty, and to restore her to his favour again; and likewise to demand me, that I might be nursed and brought up by them. The ambassadors were so little and deformed, for they were dwarfs, that the king, instead of granting what they asked, refused them rudely, and if they had not got away quickly, might have served them worse.

When

' When the fairies were informed of my father's proceedings, they were so enraged, that after they had sent all the plagues capable of rendering his kingdoms desolate, they let loose a terrible dragon that poisoned all the places wherever he came; devoured men, women and children, and killed all trees and plants with the breath of his nostrils. The king finding himself reduced to this extremity, consulted all the sages of his kingdom to know what he should do to preserve his subjects against these misfortunes wherewith they were oppressed: they advised him to send for the best physicians, to prescribe the most excellent remedies, as one means: and to pardon all criminals that were condemned to die, if they would fight with the dragon, as the other. The king, who was well enough pleased with this advice, put it in execution, but received no benefit by it; for the mortality continued, and none fought with the dragon but were devoured: insomuch, that at last he had recourse to a fairy, who had protected him from his youth, and who was so old that she hardly ever rose from off her seat. He went to her, and reproached her for permitting his fate to persecute him in such a manner without giving him some assistance. ' What would you have me do, (replied the fairy) you have provoked my sisters, who have equal power with me, and we seldom act one against another; therefore think of appeasing them by giving your daughter, since they have a right to her; set the queen at liberty, who is too good and amiable to be used so ill, and resolve to fulfil what she had promised and then I'll assure you, you shall be happy.'

' The king my father loved me dearly: but seeing no other way to preserve his kingdoms, and to be delivered from the fatal dragon, told his friend that he would believe her, and would give the fairies his daughter, since she had assured him I should be taken care of, and treated as became a princess of my birth, and release the queen: and withal, desired her to tell him how he might send me to the fairy castle. ' You must carry

carry her (said the fairy) in a cradle to the mountain of flowers, and must stay thereabouts to see what happens.' The king told her she might acquaint her litterers that he and the queen would go with me thither in eight days time, and that they might do with me what they thought proper.

' As soon as he came back to the palace, he sent for the queen, with as much love and tenderness as he had made her a prisoner with anger and passion; but she was so fallen away and altered, that he could hardly know her, if he had not been very certain she was the person he once so much doated on. He begged of her, with tears in his eyes, to forget the ill treatment she had received from him, which he promised her should be the last. She answered, that she had brought it on herself by her imprudence, in promising her child to the fairies; and that if any thing would plead her excuse, it was the condition she was then in. In short, he declared his design to her of putting me into their hands; which she opposed; and it seemed as if it was my fate to be always the cause of my father and mother's disagreeing: But after she had cried and taken-on for some time, without obtaining what she desired, (for my father too well foresaw the fatal consequences, and his subjects still dying as if they had been guilty of our faults) she consented, and preparations were made against the ceremony. I was put into a cradle of mother o'pearl, adorned as much as possible by art, with garlands of flowers, festoons hung round about it, and the flowers so intermixed with jewels of several colours, that when the sun reflected upon them, they gave such a lustre that dazzled the eyes. The magnificence of my dress exceeded, if that was possible, my cradle. All the bands and rolls of my swaddling cloaths were buckled with large pearls; four-and-twenty princesses of the blood carried me on a kind of light litter, all dressed in white, to resemble my innocence, and were followed by the whole court, according to their ranks. While they were going up the mountain, they heard a melodious symphony;

phony? and afterwards fairies appeared to the number of six-and-thirty, for the three had invited all their friends, each in a shell of pearl, as large as that wherein Venus arose out of the sea, and drawn by sea horses, in as great pomp as if they had been the first queens in the world. They were exceeding old and ugly: They carried in their hands olive branches, to signify to the king, that by his submission he had gained their favour. When they took me, it was with such extraordinary carelessness, that it seemed as if they lived only to make me happy.

The dragon, which was the instrument of their revenge against my father, followed them bound in chains of diamonds. They took me in their arms, caressed me a thousand times, endowed me with several gifts, and then fell to dancing; and it is almost incredible to believe how these old women jumped and skipped. Afterwards the devouring dragon came forwards, the three fairies, to whom my mother promised me, placed themselves upon him, and set my cradle between them; then striking the dragon with a wand, he presently displayed his large wings, which were as thin and fine as gauze, and intermixed with varicus colours, and carried them to their castle. My mother seeing me in the air upon this furious dragon, could not forbear shrieking out, while the king comforted her by the assurance his friend had given him, that no ill accident should befall me, and that I should have as great care taken of me, as if I was in their own palace: Which assurance appeased her, though she was very much grieved to lose me for so long a time; especially when she reflected that she herself was the cause of it. You must know, prince, (continued she) that my guardians built a tower on purpose for me, wherein there were a thousand beautiful apartments for all the seasons of the year, furnished with magnificent goods, and agreeable books; but there were no doors, and no other coming in but at the windows, which were prodigious high. It was surrounded by beautiful gardens,

full

full of flowers, and embellished with fountains and arbours of greens, where it was cool and pleasant in the hottest seasons. Here the fairies brought me up, and took more care of me than ever they promised the queen to do. My cloaths were so fashionable and fine, that if any one had seen me, they would have thought it had been my wedding-day. They taught me all that was proper for one of my age and birth to learn; and they had not much trouble with me, for there was nothing but what I comprehended with great ease. They were very well pleased at my ready disposition; and if I had never seen any body besides them, I should have been contented to have lived their all my life. They came very often to see me, mounted upon the same dreadful dragon I have already spoke of; they never mentioned the king or queen to me, but called me their daughter, and I thought myself really so. No creature lived with me in this tower, but a parrot and a little dog, which were endowed both with reason and speech, and were given to divert me.

One side of the tower was built upon a hollow road, set full of elms and other trees, which shaded it so much, that I never saw any one pass by while I was there; when one day, as I was at the window, talking to my parrot and dog, I heard a noise, and looking about, perceived a young gentleman, who stopped to hear our conversation. I had never seen one before but in paintings, and was not sorry that this accident had given me the opportunity; insomuch, that not mistrusting the danger we run in the satisfaction we received by the sight of so lovely an object, I looked at him again, and the more I looked, the more pleased I was. He made me a low bow, fixed his eyes on me, and seemed concerned to know how to talk to me; for my windows being a great height, he was afraid of being heard, knowing that it was a castle which belonged to fairies. Night came upon us all on a sudden, or, to speak more properly, before we perceived; he sounded his horn twice

' twice or thrice, which he thought to please me with, and then went away without my discovering which way he took, it was so dark. I remained thoughtful: the pleasure I used to take in talking to my parrot and dog, was no ways agreeable. They said all the pretty things that could be to me, for these were very witty: but my thoughts were otherwise engaged, and I had not art enough to dissemble. My parrot observed all my actions; but made no mention of what he thought. The next morning I arose with the sun, and ran to my window, where I was most agreeably surprised to see my spark, who was dressed magnificently: in which I flattered myself I had some share, and was not mistaken. He spoke to me through a speaking trumpet, told me he had been till that instant insensible to all the beauties he had beheld: but found himself so sensibly touched with me, that he could not live without seeing me. I was mightily pleased with his compliment, but vexed that I durst not make some reply; for I must have bawled out with all my might, and run the risque of being sooner heard by the fairies than him. I threw him some flowers I had in my hand, which he took for so signal a favour, that he kissed them several times, and thanked me. He asked me afterwards, if I approved of his coming every day at the same hour under my window, and if I did, to throw something: whereupon I presently pulled off a torqueuse ring, that I had on my finger, and cast it at him, making a sign for him to be gone presently, because I heard the fairy Violenta coming on the dragon to bring my breakfast.

' The first words she spoke, when she entered my chamber, were, ' I smell the voice of a man; a search, dragon.' Alas! what a condition was I in! I was ready to die with fear, lest he should find out, and follow my lover. Indeed, (said I) my good mamma, (for the fairy would be called so), you banter, when you say you smell the voice of a man: can any one smell a voice? and should it be so, what wretch

' wretch could be so bold as to venture coming up into
' this tower? ' What you say is very true, child,
' (said she) I am overjoyed to hear you argue so well:
' I fancy it is the hatred I have against men, that
' makes me think them nigh when they are not: how-
' ever, I have brought you your breakfast and a distaff;
' be sure spin; yesterday you did nothing, and my
' sisters are very angry.' (Upon my word I was so
' taken up with this stranger, that I was not able to
' work.) As soon as her back was turned, I threw away
' my distaff, and went upon the terrass, to look as far
' as my eye would carry, in an excellent spying-glass
' I had; by which, after having looked about some
' time, I discovered my lover under a rich pavillion
' of cloth of gold on the top of a high mountain, sur-
' rounded by a numerous court. I doubted not but
' that he was some neighbouring king's son, and was
' afraid, lest, when he came to the tower again, he
' should be found out by the terrible dragon. I went
' and fetched my parrot, and bid him fly to that moun-
' tain, to desire him, from me, not to come again,
' because I was afraid my guardian should discover it,
' and he should come into danger. My parrot acquit-
' ted himself of his commission, and surprised all the
' courtiers, to see him come upon full wing, and perch
' upon the prince's shoulder, and whisper him softly
' in the ear. The prince was both overjoyed and
' troubled at this message; my care flattered his passion.
' but the difficulty there was in speaking to me, gave
' him as much chagrin. He asked the parrot a thou-
' sand questions, and the parrot him as many; for he
' was naturally inquisitive. The prince in return
' for my torqueise, sent me a ring of another, but
' much finer than mine, cut in the shape of a heart,
' and set round with diamonds; and told him (that
' he might treat him more like an ambassador) he
' would present him with his picture, which he might
' shew to his charming mistress. The picture was tied
' under his wings, and the ring he brought in his bill,

' I waited

' I waited for the return of my green courtier, with
' an impatience unknown to me till then. He told
' me the person I sent him to was a great king, who
' had received him with all the joy possible; and
' that I might assure myself he lived only for me, and
' that though it was very dangerous for him to come
' so low as my tower, yet he was resolved to hazard
' all to see me. This news had such an effect upon
' me, that I fell a-crying. My parrot and dog com-
forted me the best they could, for they loved me ten-
derly; and then the parrot delivered the prince's ring
to me, and shewed me his picture. I must own I was
overjoyed that I could view so nigh a person I had
never seen but at a distance. He appeared much
more lovely than he seemed, and the different
thoughts this sight inspired me with, for some were
agreeable to me, and others not, made me very un-
easy, which the fairies, when they come to see me,
discovered. They said to one another, that I was cer-
tainly troubled at something, and that they must
think of providing a husband for me of the fairy race.
They named several, but at last pitched on the little
king Migonnet, whose kingdom lay about five hundred
leagues off from their palace, but that was of no great
importance. My parrot heard all their discourse,
and came to give an account. ' Alas! my dear mis-
tress, (said my bird) how much I pity you, if you
should be king Migonnet's queen! he is enough to
fright you, which I am sorry to tell you; but one
thing I am sure of, the king who loves you, scorns to
have such a one for his foot boy: and I think, (continu-
ed he) if I am not much mistaken, I have perched upon
the same bow with him.' How do you mean, (repli-
ed I) on the same bow? ' Why, (said he) he has
feet like an eagle.' I was very much afflicted at this
account, I looked on the charming picture of the young
king, and fancied he only gave it my parrot, that I
might have an opportunity of seeing it, but when I
compared it with Migonnet, I lost all hopes of life,
and resolved to die sooner than marry him. I slept
not all night, but talked with my parrot and dog, and
' towards

towards morning began to close my eyes. My dog, who had a good nose, smelt the king at the foot of the tower: he awakened the parrot, and said to him, 'I'll engage the king is below.' To which the parrot made answer, ' Hold thy tongue, thou prating fool; because thy eyes and ears are always open, you are vexed that any body else should have rest.' ' Well,' said the dog,) I am sure he is. ' And, (replied the parrot) I am sure he is not: for I have, from my mistress, forbid him coming.' ' You talk finely of your forbidding him; (cried the dog) a man in love consults nothing but his passions.' Thereupon, pulling the parrot by the tale, he made such a noise that I awoke. They told me of their dispute, I ran or rather flew to the window, whence I saw the king holding out his arms, who, by his trumpet, told me he could not live without me; that he possessed a flourishing kingdom, and conjured me to find out some way to escape from my tower, or let him come to me; calling heaven and all the elements to witness, that he would marry me, and make me his queen. I bid my parrot go and tell him, that what he desired seemed almost impossible; that, however, upon the word he had given, and oaths he had sworn to me, I would endeavour to accomplish his desires: but withal, to conjure him not to come every day, lest he should be discovered, which might prove fatal to us both.

' He went away, overjoyed with the flattering hopes I gave him. I found myself in the utmost confusion, when I reflected on what I had promised. I knew not how one so young, timorous, and unexperienced, should get out of a tower, to which there were no doors, with the assistance only of a dog and a parrot, therefore I resolved not to attempt a thing in which I could never succeed, and so sent my parrot to acquaint the king with it; who was for killing himself that minute; but at last charged the parrot to persuade me to it, and to come and see him die, or to bring him some comfort. To which my winged ambaf-

sador answered, that he was very well persuaded his mistress only wanted the power. When he gave me an account of what had happened, I was more grieved than ever. The fairy Violenta came, and found my eyes swelled and red; she told me I had been crying, and if I did not tell her the reason, she would burn me. I answered, trembl'ing, I was weary with spining, and that I had a great desire to make some nets to catch some birds, that destroyed the fruit in the garden. 'What you desire, child (said she) shall cost you no more tears, I will bring you materials enough to-night; but I would rather you thought less of working, and more of setting off your beauty, because king Mignonnet will be hear in a few days.' I sighed at this news, but made no reply; but as soon as her back was turned, began two or three rows of my nets, and afterwards applied myself to the making a ladder of ropes. But as the fairy had not furnished me with as much as I wanted, which obliged me to ask for more, she told me my work was like Penelope's web, it went not forwards, and yet I teased her for more stuff. O good mamma! (said I) you may say what you please; but you must know that as I am not very ready at this work, I burn it when it does not please me. With which excuse she seemed satisfied, and left me.

I sent my parrot that night to bid the king come under my window, where he would find a ladder, and to tell him he should know more when he came; in short, I had tied it very fast, and was determined to escape with him by this means; but he, as soon as he saw it, without waiting for my coming down, mounted up in haste, and threw himself into my chamber, as I was making things ready for my flight. I was so overjoyed to see him, that I forgot the danger we were in. He renewed all his oaths, and entreated me to defer his happiness no longer: we made my parrot and dog the witnesses of our marriage, which was the most private in the world for persons of our rank, and none certainly were ever better satisfied.

The

The king left me before day : I told him of the fairies design to marry me to Mignonnet, and gave him a description of his mean and sorry figure, for which his horror was as great as mine. As soon as the king was gone, the hours seemed like years ; I ran to the window, and followed him with my eyes, notwithstanding the darkness ; but how great was my surprise to see a fiery chariot drawn in the air, by six winged salamanders, who flew so swift, that the eye was not able to follow them. This chariot was attended by a great many guards, all mounted on ostriches. I did not give myself time to think that it was Mignonnet that was thus traversing the air, but I believed it was a fairy, or inchanter. Soon after, the fairy Violenta came into my chamber, and told me she brought me good news, that my lover would be with me presently, and bid me prepare myself to receive him : and with that gave me fine clothes and jewels. But pray, (said I) who has informed you that I want to be married ? I am sure it is the farthest from my thoughts ; therefore send king Mignonnet back again : for I will not put in one pin more, whether he thinks me handsome or not ? I am not for him. ‘ Oh ! oh ! (said the fairy again) little rebel, little empty-pate, I shall not mind your raillery, but I shall — What will you do ? (replied I, enraged at the names she had called me) can any one be worse served than I am, to live all my days immured with a parrot and a dog, and to be visited constantly by that frightful dragon ? ‘ Ha ! ingrate ! (said the fairy) is this all we deserve for our care and pains ; I have told my sisters but too often, we should have but sorry recompence.’ At this she went away, and told them of our difference, which put them into no little amazement.

‘ My parrot and dog remonstrated to me, that if I should continue any longer thus sturdy, they foresaw that I should undergo some misfortune. But I was so proud of possessing the heart of a king, that I despised both the fairies, and the advice of those my little companions. I would not dress me ; but strove

' all I could to tumble my head-dres, that I might appear less agreeable to Migonnet. We had an interview upon the terras, he came in his fiery chariot; but of all dwarfs, he was the least I ever saw in my life. His feet were like an eagle's, and close to his knees, for legs he had none. His royal garment was not above half a yard long, and trailed one third part upon the ground. His head was as big as a peck, and his nose long enough for twelve birds to perch on it, and be regaled at the same time with a delightful bush, for his beard was large enough for canary birds to build their nests in: and for his ears, they reached a foot above his head, but were a great part hid by a high crown that he wore to appear more grand. The flame of his chariot coddled the fruit, withered the flowers, and dried up the fountains of the gardens. He came with open arms to embrace me, and I stood upright, which obliged his first squire to hold him up. As soon as he came near to me, I ran to my chamber, and fastened my window: so that Migonnet enraged, was forced to retire to the fairies, who asked a thousand pardons for the affront; and to appease him because he was powerful, they resolved to bring him at night into my chamber, and while I was asleep, to tie my hands and feet, and put me into his chariot. Things being thus agreed on, they only chided me for what I had done, and charged me to think of making him amends for the future. Which mildness of theirs surprised my parrot and dog, who told me their hearts misgave them, for they knew the fairies to be strange ill-tempered sort of old ladies, and especially Violenta. I laughed at their fears, and waited with the utmost impatience for my dear husband, whose desires to see me again were no less violent: I threw out the ladder of ropes, resolving to escape with him, he came softly up it, and said a thousand kind things, which I dare not recall to my remembrance.

' While we were talking to gether, with the same tranquillity as if it had been in his own palace, he saw all on a sudden the windows broke open, and the fairies enter

‘ enter upon their frightful dragon, followed by Mignon-
net in his fiery chariot, and all his guards on ostriches.
‘ The king, without any dismay, clapped his hand on
his sword, and thought of securing and protecting me;
when these barbarous creatures set their dragon upon
him, which devoured him before my face. Vexed,
and in despair, I threw myself into the mouth of this
dreadful monster, that he might swallow me as he had
done the prince, who was dearer to me than all the
world besides. And I had certainly undergone the same
fate; but the fairies, who were more cruel than the
monster, would not permit it, but said, I must be
reserved for greater punishments; a quick death was
too mild a one for so base a creature: whereupon
touching me, I found myself changed into a White Cat.
They conducted me to this stately palace, which be-
longed to my father, and turned all the lords and
ladies into cats; and for the rest of his subjects, left
of them only the hands, which we see, and reduced
me to that miserable condition you found me: let-
ting me know at the same time my birth, the death of
my father and mother, and that I never should be re-
leased from this metamorphosis, but by a prince that
perfectly resembled my husband, who they deprived me
of. You sir, have that resemblance, the same features,
air and voice: I was struck as soon as I saw you, and
was informed of all that should happen, and am still
of all that shall come to pass: my pains will be at an
end.’ ‘ And shall mine, fair queen, (said the prince)
be of long duration?’ ‘ I love you, sir, already more
than my life, (said the queen) we must go to your
father and know his sentiments for me, and whether
he will consent to what you desire.’ After this she
went out, the prince handed her into a chariot, which
was much more magnificent than that she had, and
then went into it himself. All the rest of the equipage
answered it so well, that the buckles of the horses har-
nesses were diamonds and emeralds. I shall say no-
thing of their conversation, which must be very polite,
since

since she was not only a great beauty, but also a great wit; and for the prince, he was no ways inferior to her therein: so that all their thoughts were bright and lively.

When they came nigh the castle where the brothers were to meet, the queen went into a cage of crystal set in gold, which had curtains drawn about it, that she might not be seen, and was carried by handsome young men richly clothed. The prince staid in the chariot, and saw his brothers walking with two princesses of extraordinary beauty. As soon as they knew him, they came to receive him, and asked him if he had brought a mistress along with him; to which he answered, that he had been so unfortunate in all his journey, to meet with none, but what were very ugly; but that he had brought a pretty White Cat. ‘A cat, (said they, ‘laughing) what was you afraid that mice should devour our our palace?’ The prince replied, that he was not very wise in making such a present to his father, but it was the greatest rarity he could meet with. Afterwards they all bent their course towards the capital town. The two elder princes and the princesses went in calashes of blue embossed with gold, with plumes of white feathers upon the horses heads; nothing was finer than this cavalcade. The younger prince followed after, and then the cage of crystal, which every body admired. The courtiers crowded to tell the king that the princes were arrived, and brought most beautiful ladies along with them; which news was no ways pleasing to the king. The two eldest princes were very earnest to shew him the beauties they had brought, whoin he received kindly, but knew not in whose favour to decide; when looking on the youngest, ‘What (said he) are you come by yourself?’ ‘Your majesty, (replied the prince) will find in this cage a pretty little cat, which mews and plays so sweetly, that you will be very well pleased with her.’ Here at, the king smiled, and was going to open the cage; but as soon as he approached towards it, the queen with a spring broke it in pieces, and appeared like the sun when it breaks fourth.

from:

from a cloud. Her fine hair was spread upon her shoulders, and laid in fine large rings, and her forehead was adorned with flowers. Her gown was a thin white gauze, lined with a rose coloured taffety. She made the king a low courtesy, who in the excess of his admiration could not forbear crying out, ‘ This is the incomparable fairy who deserves my crown.’ ‘ Sir, (said she) I came not to rob you of your crown, which you wear so worthily: I was born heiress to six kingdoms, give me leave to present one of them to you, and one to either of your sons, for which I ask no other return but your friendship, and this young prince in marriage: three kingdoms will be enough for us.’ The king and all the court were not able to express their joy and amazement. The marriages of the three princes and their princesses were celebrated at the same time, and the court spent several months in pleasures and diversions; after which they all went to their dominions, and the White Cat gained as great honour by her bounty and generosity, as by her rare merit and beauty.

F I N I S.

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